

COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XVII.—No. 418. [REGISTERED AT THE
[G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7th, 1905.

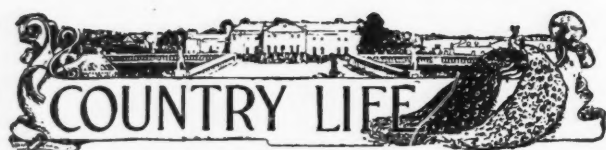
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H. WALTER BARNETT.

THE CROWN PRINCESS OF ROUMANIA.

I, Fark Side, S.W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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. With this issue of COUNTRY LIFE we are giving away a copy of THE GARDEN in its new form, but our readers ought to remember that the two can be posted only as separate newspapers.

FIELD NAMES.

THE Rev. Canon Ellacombe in the *National Review* for January has a most interesting article relating to a minor subject connected with farms and estates. Every one who has to do with the land must have wondered at times how certain fields came to have names associated with them. In some cases the explanation is simple, in others it is more or less obscure. Canon Ellacombe holds that the custom of using such terms for land is entirely modern, and does not belong to classic times. The *Agellus* of Horace is never particularised more than by the word "iste." Our own field names are nearly all compounds, into which certain old words enter freely. The most natural of these is, of course, Acre, which etymologically is *ager*—a field. Such terms as Long Acre, Broad Acre would, therefore, be applied very easily. Canon Ellacombe thinks that the phrase "God's Acre" has been borrowed from the German, and that Hangman's Acre does not refer to the executioner, but to Hanger, a word that White of Selborne liked, and is still in common usage. Meadow and Close are both old English words fairly common in the designation of fields. So, in certain parts of the country, is Croft, a word to be found in Piers Plowman, "thanne Shal to come by crofte." Leaze is another common word for a field name. We have Cow Leaze, Beech Leaze, Pigeon House Leaze, and, of course, many leazes characterised by the use of a previous owner's name, such as Waring's Leaze. The word itself meant a pasture, and two well-known passages in the Psalms are rendered by Wycliffe, "we ben the puple of his lesewe" and "the schepe of his lesewe." Tynning is obsolete in speech, but still exists in field names, as in Long Tynning, Upper Tynning, Robin's Tynning, and so on. It is from the Anglo-Saxon *tynen*, to hedge in, and was used to designate ground enclosed by hedges. The familiar word paddock occurs often in field names. Canon Ellacombe suggests that the word paddock

signifies that at some time or other the place must have marked the neighbourhood of a house of some importance.

Owners frequently applied their own names to the fields, but probably these did not survive very long, as a new-comer naturally did not care to have in familiar use the name of his predecessor. And, at any rate, these have not the same interest as the names which point back to the time when the manorial system was in force. We take a village in the North as an example. There is in its neighbourhood a Westfield, an Eastfield, and a Moor. The last-mentioned has long been ploughed up and enclosed, but it was waste of the manor at one time, though the common rights have been extinguished since the early part of the nineteenth century. There is also an interesting field still called the Backs, a name which, of course, requires no explanation on the part of those who have studied the old manorial system. The whole surroundings help us to picture what the old-world life must have been: The Seigneur, or Lord of the Manor, in his castle, with the villeins who paid him a labour rent working two or three days on the Manor, two or three days on the land allotted to them, while they had the waste, with its rights of free pasturage, of cutting turf, carting gravel, lopping certain trees, and other privileges of the common. When these passed away the yeomen came in their place, holders of tiny farms, each with its garth and thatched cottage. It is quite common to find the ruins of houses like these that have fallen down, and we know of one in particular, part of which stood as a hostelry as long ago as the fourteenth century. It subsequently became, about the time of Elizabeth, we believe, the home of a yeoman farmer, and showed traces of being mended and built upon by many succeeding generations. There were about a dozen such ownerships in the village, but they have all passed away now except one; and, though it remains in its entirety as an interesting relic of the past, the occupier is only tenant, and the land for long has been in possession of a great estate-owner. But some of these houses lasted well on to the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, and near where one or two of them stood you can still see snowdrop and crocus and violet putting forth their shy little heads where once there was a garden fair, and children whose bones have long been dust played among the flowers.

Another extremely interesting type of field name which does not seem to be mentioned by Canon Ellacombe is that which is derived from warfare. Near the field of Flodden there are many very interesting relics of this kind relating to that famous fight. The farm halfway down the hill is called Encampment, which seems to point to the situation of King James's army. Looking to the north, across a champaign country with beautifully-hedged fields and snug farm-places, where the red-roofed cottages nestle from trees, above which, on still days, the cottage smoke mounts in pillars, is Slainsfield, a place where no doubt many of Surrey's rank and file bit the dust. Another field is named the Generals, and there is one with a great stone in it, said to mark the spot where King James IV. fell fighting, and the field is known by his name. Not far from Slainsfield is a farm called Watch Law, and here, no doubt, the Borderers of an earlier period looked out for the raiding Scot, who, bent on "feud and fra," came lopping over that desolate country on his hardy and well-trained pony, ready to make the red cock crow where many a comfortable homestead was. The study of field names is, from many points of view, a most fascinating one, and we have often thought that a most interesting book might be made on the subject. At present whoever desires to obtain information may be referred to the old volumes of "Notes and Queries," where many have been put on record. Canon Ellacombe pays a deserved tribute to the award which was made under the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. At that time every parish in England and Wales was surveyed, and in the published report the names were given of the owner and occupier, a description of each field of tithable property, whether arable, pasture, garden, or woodland, with the exact acreage of each and the name and its charge for tithes. He classifies this document with Domesday Book itself as a most valuable aid to a study of the land at that time. Unfortunately, to obtain access to this knowledge, it is necessary to penetrate the archives of certain Government offices. It would certainly be worth the while of the Board of Agriculture to publish the particulars a piece at a time in the excellent journal now issued from the Whitehall office.

Our Portrait Illustration.

ON our front page will be found a portrait of the Crown Princess of Roumania. Princess Marie Alexandra Victoria, who was married to Prince Ferdinand, eldest son of the King of Roumania, in 1893, is a daughter of the late Duke of Edinburgh, second son of Queen Victoria, and of the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna. Her Royal Highness is, therefore, a niece of King Edward. She has two sons and two daughters.



WHENEVER the King and Queen go to Chatsworth, their reception is exceedingly enthusiastic and brilliant; and so it was on Monday. Although there was no formal reception or ceremony, the cheers with which His Majesty was greeted when he entered the carriage to leave the station rang loud and true. The place had been well decorated with flags by the villagers, but, unfortunately, they were hidden by the darkness. However, there were 300 torch-bearers to shed a light on the slope leading to the north gates of Chatsworth. Most of them were tenants and labourers on the estate, members of the local fire brigades, and of the Church Lads' Brigade. As the King approached, the bells of Edensor Church rang out, and their cheering cling-clang seemed to be all that was necessary to add to the picturesque effect of the flaring torches.

For the second time the Japanese have succeeded in taking Port Arthur, and the siege on the present occasion will rank as one of the most remarkable in history. But it brings with it, in addition to military prestige, many solid advantages. The importance of this warm-water harbour was thoroughly appreciated by the Russians when, after the Chinese War, they forced the victors to surrender it. Its possession has been the chief bone of contention during the present contest. No doubt the Japs will now be able to render it an impregnable fortress. Its surrender will also enable them to bring new reinforcements against Kuropatkin. The guns, stores, and other military equipments that have been accumulated in prodigious quantities will now be available for use in the field. The event is the most important that has yet occurred during the war, and may, if Russia is wise, hasten it to a conclusion.

In the conduct of the siege the Japanese have distinguished themselves not only by showing the greatest expertness in using the means of warfare they imported from the West, but also by their lavish outlay of human life. As we have more than once pointed out, the nation seems to teem with warrior heroes, who, far from shrinking from death, seem actually to court it. Utter fearlessness is the most pronounced characteristic of the Japanese soldier. In the defence, General Stoessel has won laurels almost as bright as those bestowed on his victor. He fought with unflinching and unflagging energy and resource. To his men he has shown a fine example of unbroken courage and high spirit that nothing could quell. The fact that the defence failed in the end will never be traced to him, but it must cause military tacticians to reconsider some of their views on defences. At the beginning of the war it was freely said that no besieging army in the world could make head against the modern fortifications and machine guns, and certainly that is the conclusion to which our own experience in South Africa seemed to lead. But the result shows that the tacticians were wrong.

Count Tolstoi, some three years ago, when he thought he was dying, wrote a remarkable letter to the Czar of Russia, which was published in Monday's *Times*. It is by no means such an extravagant composition as might have been expected. The eminent novelist, who seems to have as high an opinion of himself as the Hon. Mrs. Norton, who received a Sovereign of Europe with the remark that an empress of letters could very well meet on equal terms with the mere empress of a country, addresses the Czar as "Dear Brother"; but he somewhat spoils the familiarity by apologising for, or, what is the same thing, explaining, it in the first paragraph, wherein he says he appeals to him not as to a Czar, but as to a man—a brother, and also "because I write to you, as it were, from the other world, expecting the approach of death." The message might be condensed into a phrase used by the late John Bright, "force is no remedy." Tolstoi did not refer to the war, for the very sufficient reason that, when he supposedly lay on his death-bed, the war had not commenced.

However that might be, the letter contains many fine and pathetic passages, like that in which he says: "Dear Brother, you have but one life in this world, and you can spend it painfully in futile efforts to arrest the God-ordained progress of mankind from evil to good, from darkness to light; or you may, entering into the needs and desires of the people, and devoting your life to their satisfaction, peacefully and joyously pass it in the service of God and man." Tolstoi writes quite in the spirit of one whose worldly task is done, with the detachment and frankness, the faith and courage of one who has no longer any wrath to fear, any favour to crave, of those in this world. And it might have been well for the Czar if, in the hour of bitter agony that Russia has passed through, he had surrounded himself with counsellors as single-minded as this great and eminent man of letters.

One of the most satisfactory facts that we learn from the theatre of war is that the wounded Japanese soldiers, in a great majority of cases, have virtually recovered from their injuries, after an extremely skilful "first aid" treatment, by the time they have reached the base hospitals. This quick recovery from clean wounds is rather what we should expect *à priori* of a hardy, temperate, and rice-eating people, like both the great families of the Yellow Race. It is, however, in remarkable contrast with all that we are told by surgeons who have practised in hospitals in the East. Speaking of the Chinese, more particularly, they tell us that the patients are peculiarly liable to death from nerve shock after operation. The actual operation generally seems to be borne well, but collapse frequently follows, with no recuperative faculty. This experience seems hard to reconcile with what we are told of the excellent recovery generally made by the wounded Japanese.

FINE DOINGS INTO HOSPITAL.

Do say, when Christmas-time came round,
The sick folk weren't forgot, and found
No need to mope, though they were bound
To lie from home in hospital.

They had a dinner, "Oh, dear me!"
They tell it were a sight to see—
And presents each from off a tree
To Dorchester in hospital.

Not yet that wadn't all. Kind folk
Did come and zing to 'em, and spoke
To some who'd dreaded when they woke
To Christmas spend in hospital.

You may depend when you be sick
They'll cure 'ee quicker'n if you stick
To home a-mekking work; so quick,
And get took into hospital.

BLUE VINNEY.

Within a period of two years, and at a cost of two and a-half millions, it is estimated that all our Artillery will be armed with 18½-pounder guns of the best possible pattern. The nation is not disposed to deem this outlay excessive for the security that it ought to go far to ensure, and certainly neither the War Office nor the Treasury will be accused of over-much haste in deciding to incur it.

After two quarters of decreasing revenue return it is so far satisfactory that the third quarter of the year should show an increase of more than a million, though it still leaves a considerable deficiency on the nine months. However, it is expected that the returns for the quarter ending in March will be good as compared with those of last year, since, for one thing, the additional penny on the income-tax comes into operation. In the daily papers many auguries, good and bad, have been drawn from these statistics; but too much importance should not be attached to them. The depression in trade has certainly not ceased yet, and it is difficult to find any signs of returning prosperity. On the other hand, if the pessimists will compare this reaction with that which took place ten years ago, or the others chronicled in history, they will not find much reason for their loud lamentations. At the moment, perhaps, it is only fair to excuse a certain amount of amateur attempts at prophesy, since the statisticians are divided into two camps, each of which would read the figures in its own way.

The New Year brought with it little change of a domestic nature beyond a day of hard weather, though marked abroad by an event of great historic significance. It is becoming, perhaps, more of an institution in London than used to be the case, many of the wealthy and middle classes choosing New Year's Eve, or Hogmanay as it was called in the old Braed Scotch, as a pleasant opportunity for following the modern custom and gathering their friends together to dine or sup in a restaurant.

The usual crowd of people assembled in front of St. Paul's, just as they do before the great Tron Kirk at Edinburgh, and there was a guid New Yearing and a consumption of Usquebaugh that might have done credit to the Northern metropolis itself. Meanwhile London showed one of those striking contrasts in which it is so rich, since crowds equally great were holding midnight services at the passing of the year. For the capital of England has some of that strange glamour ascribed to the Egyptian god Hathor, in whom it was said every man could find what he looked for—his heart's desire.

The baronetcy and the loan of Richmond Thatched Lodge as a residence, which have been bestowed upon Sir Edmund Monson on his retirement from the post of Ambassador to the French Republic, are rewards which few will decry as extravagant. Sir Edmund, in the half century during which he was in the Government service, passed from the bottom rung of the diplomatic ladder to the top; and the fact that his name was never, as the phrase goes, "in everybody's mouth," was, in itself, a testimonial to his skill in dealing with international complications. Though an old and tried public servant, he was not, perhaps, our greatest Ambassador of recent years, nor had he the same chances of earning distinction upon special missions as had the late Lord Dufferin. Sir Edmund Monson, during his residence in Paris, was in the odd position of being heir-presumptive to his private secretary—Lord Monson—also his nephew.

The statement reads a little curiously that Mr. J. J. Harrison, who is just starting for the Congo, has received permission from the Belgian Government to bring back some of the pigmies of that region. Why permission? Sir Harry Johnston, the chief authority on the little people, has no doubts as to their belonging to the human race. They are not to be "brought back," like a cage of monkeys, and, as belonging to the human race, they have the rights of man, which includes exemption from slavery, according to our interpretation of the rights; and neither the Belgian nor any other Government has a right to prevent them leaving the Congo if they choose. But no doubt the true meaning of the permit is to obviate trouble with the Belgian officials in the Congo.

In writing a review of last year's salmon-fishing a contributor to one of the evening papers recalls the fact that only a short time ago a policeman was had up in the Highlands for burning the water. But burning the water is not nowadays carried on in the same way as it was when Meg Merrilies was an inhabitant of this dim spot that men call earth. Then, as readers of Scott know, it was customary to go out in boats with long spears. Nowadays the poachers, for poachers they are, proceed on foot. On each side of him who carries the leister, a three or four toed spear, is a torch-bearer. On each bank walks a man with a bag and a bottle of whisky. He that spears looks down in the water, where the fish lying on their gravelled beds seem to be fascinated by the light. He strikes just below the head, and flings the booty to the bank. The whisky is necessary because in wading the river by dark a man is almost certain every now and then to flounder into a deep hole, and for cases of drowning or half drowning there is but one cure that in the opinion of Caledonia is absolutely infallible. Is it necessary to say what it is?

We hope on a future occasion to publish a fuller account of the garden village established by Mr. Rowntree in Yorkshire. The idea of great employers of labour founding places in the country where their servants can obtain clean and comfortable house-room, a patch of garden, and an open space in which to enjoy their games and other recreations, is one deserving of the utmost encouragement. A similar scheme was carried out by Mr. Cadbury, and another at Port Sunlight. No objection can be taken to placing these enterprises on a thoroughly business footing. The element of charity which used to enter largely into schemes for the housing of the poor is not a desirable one, as it naturally saps the reliance and independence of those for whose advantage they are drawn up. The tenants are much more likely to be happy when they know that the houses they live in are taken and occupied by free choice and on a plan that is commercially not unremunerative to the owner. Mr. Rowntree's village is set going with the entire good wishes of all who are interested in this question, and we hope to show our readers photographs and plans of the houses, in order that those who nurse similar dreams of benefiting the poor may have in their possession what help is obtainable from them.

We cannot altogether profess to admire that institution of growing popularity called a Christmas dinner to horses. One was given at Acton on the first day of the year. Sixty horses in loose boxes were presented with a New Year's box full of biscuits, apples, carrots, and bits of sugar and bread. It carries us back

to the days of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms; but the founders of the feast, to have completed the arrangements in a proper manner, should have presented the horses with a variety entertainment, a little light juggling, a comic song, such as the veterans would, no doubt, remember as having heard when in lusty youth they dragged the strayed reveller home in his trusty hansom. With a few little incidental improvements such as these the entertainment would have been worthy of the occasion, though if the Houyhnhnms could speak, they would have probably addressed one another in the language of a famous sportsman, "Let us chuck the cackle and come to the 'osses."

According to one of the medical papers Dr. Icard has invented a new test for ascertaining whether death has taken place or not. He regards it as absolutely trustworthy. A solution of fluorescein is injected deeply into the cellular tissue. If circulation still goes on it produces intense jaundice of the skin and mucous membrane, while the eye becomes green "like an emerald set in the orbit." If the circulation has completely stopped nothing of the kind is seen. The medical authorities do not consider that burial alive is anything but a most uncommon occurrence, except on the battlefield; yet the fear and horror of it prevail to such an extent that it must add to the comfort of many people to know that an absolute test can be applied. If we were to believe imaginative writers, the most tremendous struggles have taken place after burial, when the person who was supposed to be deceased awoke out of his stupor and endeavoured to make his escape. It is very difficult to believe that such a horrible accident should occur in reality. One would think that the lack of ventilation in a grave would soon bring about the end of a comatose and presumably weak individual.

APIS MELLIFICA.

The honey-bee compels my pen,
Although it be beyond my ken
To search out all his busy ways,
His industry and skill to praise,
As moralists to idle men;
The linden grove, the heathery glen,
He'll leave for scentless cyclamen,
To suit my rhyme—though scarce it pays
The honey-bee;
Yet brief his hour of wealth, for when,
His winter storehouse filled again,
In the mature September days,
Man, wiler than the beasts, betrays
Designs of plunder—whose shall then
The honey be?

H. RAPHOE.

The death of John O'Reilly, the first discoverer of South African diamonds, draws attention to the extraordinary history of the last and greatest diamond-mines known in the world's history. In 1867 he obtained a shining stone from a Boer, who had seen a child playing with it. The child's mother gave it to him, and he sold it for a trifle to O'Reilly. The latter rode to Colesberg and applied the rough test of scratching his name on the hotel window with the stone. It was then submitted to a proper test, sent to the Paris Exhibition, and sold for £500. The Boer started a private enquiry among the natives for "shining stones," got one, of great size, and received £11,200 for it. Another Boer found a diamond sticking in the wall of a mud hut, and in a short time four mines were started, which the late Cecil Rhodes consolidated into "De Beers," and from which last year £4,900,000 profit was made. It is curious that while this store of African diamonds has been increasing in area, the ancient Indian mines produce almost nothing for the European market. Golconda was only the mart where they were sold; but there were many valuable mines in Southern India which supplied the greater number of the famous diamonds of the world. Possibly the stones now found are bought up secretly by the Indian nobles, who have long regarded these stones as a convenient and unperishable form of investment.

The change that has taken place in the published price of well-known daily papers seems to have influenced even horticultural journalism, our contemporary, the *Garden*, having taken a bold and, we hope, successful step in reducing its price from 3d. weekly to 1d. The object of the new departure is solely to bring this long-established journal within the influence of a wider gardening public than was possible under the old price, and it is pleasant to know that this change will not mean any alterations in the fine traditions of the paper, which has for the past thirty-three years appealed to those who love beautiful gardening. The beginner will find in the new series even more helpful notes than in the past. A coloured illustration of new tobacco flowers is given with the first number, and in the future a coloured plate of a new plant or fruit, or some interesting gardens in the British Isles, will appear every fortnight. The *Garden* has our hearty good wishes for its future success.

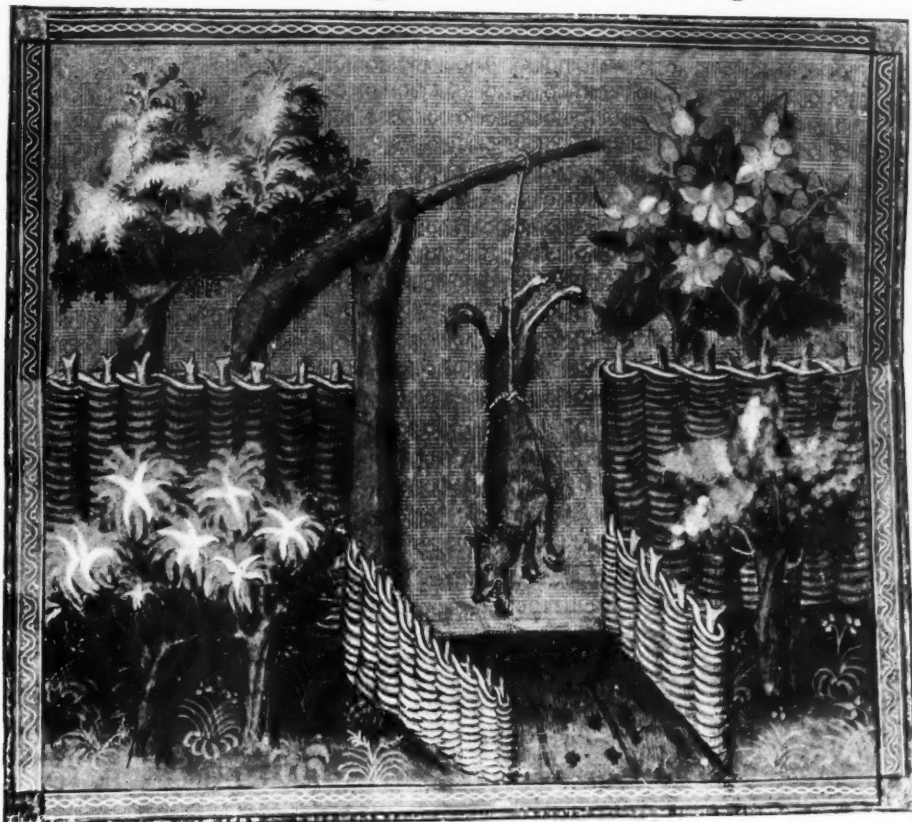
WOLF-HUNTING FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

THE exciting times the shepherds and sportsmen of Northumberland have had lately in their attempts to circumvent the wolf that is committing such wholesale depredations among the flocks in that county, have suggested the following brief account of the hunting and trapping of its progenitors in the olden days. The illustrations I am using are accurate fac-simile reproductions from the most famous of all ancient books on sport, written, 1387, by Count Gaston de Foix, a kinsman of our Plantagenet kings and ruler of a Principality of the same name on the northern slopes of the Pyrenees. And, as the readers of COUNTRY LIFE interested in old sport may remember, not very long ago a picture of wolf-hunting taken from the same book appeared in the series dealing with "The Master of Game," England's oldest book on hunting.

In explanation of the present illustrations of how the wolf was trapped, the following particulars may be found of use.

The first shows us the *hausse-pieds*, or, as the "Master of Game" calls it, the *anceps*, a gallows-like erection supplied with a running noose, the latter overhanging a run-way whither led a trail of blood as a lure. By the struggles of the wolf when he felt the loop about his body a heavy counter-weight on the other end of the beam was freed, and, as we see, swung the wolf into the air in such a manner that he could not bite through the rope.

The next shows us the pit trap, dug close to the farm buildings, round which wolves were in the habit of roaming, particularly in winter. These pits were deep holes, covered over with boughs on which some tempting bait was deposited. Sometimes hurdles, nicely balanced on hinged pivots, covered the pits, and, when tilted up by the weight of the beast, caused him to



THE HAUSSE-PIEDS WOLF TRAP.

drop down to the bottom of the roft, or 12ft. deep hole. That these pits were of considerable depth, and also a danger to pedestrians, is shown by Gesner's tale of such a pit once harbouring an old woman, a fox, and a wolf.

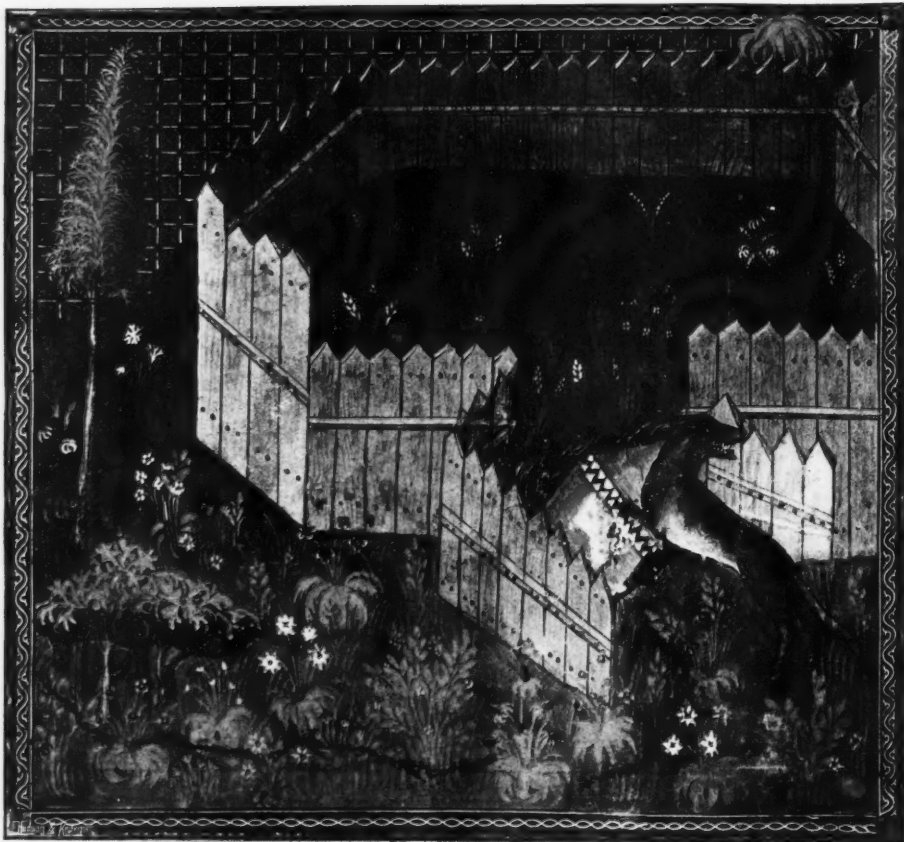
The third illustration is an iron spring trap, with formidable teeth in its powerful jaws, while a hind quarter of some large beast—apparently that of a horse—beyond the trap represented the lure, which was to entice the robber to enter the enclosure. From a practical point of view spring traps with such heavy teeth are not to be recommended, and a Canadian trapper would laugh at this formidable engine, for by cutting into the flesh and sinews of the wolf's leg it is much easier for him to wrench himself loose at the sacrifice of the latter than if caught in toothless jaws that only hold his leg.

The next picture presents to us an ingenious contrivance by which wolves were caught alive. In an inner circular enclosure, made of stout stake and binder fencing, was placed a live sheep or roe, and round the fence was built a second enclosure, leaving a narrow passage between the two just wide enough to allow a wolf to pass. The outer fence was provided, as we see, with a door with a common latch, and a trail of blood led into the door and round the circular passage. When the wolf reached the door, after making the circuit, he closed it in his attempt to pass it, so that the latch fell into its place and made him a prisoner. In the drawing, the passage-way is made to appear too broad, and the fences too low, but the text accompanying the drawing leaves no doubt of its purport.

The next drawing shows us how wolves were taken *à la croupie*, a somewhat slow and uncertain method, described by Gaston de Foix as follows: "Kill a beast as near as possible to the locality where you think wolves are hiding, and then drag the carcass about the wood. This trail the wolves will follow, and you must let them have



WOLF APPROACHING A PIT SNARE.



THE OLD-FASHIONED WOLF TRAP.

undisturbed access to the bait the first night. The second night you must take the carcass to a tree, and about a stone's throw from it under the wind you must stretch three nets, and there, on the third night, should three men be hidden, two at the ends of the nets and one more in the middle, and when the wolves come to eat the carcass and are between the men and the latter, the watchers should cry and throw sticks at the wolves so as to cause them to fly towards the nets and thus be taken alive or dead as the men chose." As a concluding warning the old writer repeats his admonition: "Above all have regard to the wind, for wolves have a keen scent."

A far more cruel device is shown in our last picture, viz., the *aiguilles* or needles. These consisted of needle-shaped bits of wood doubled in a bow-like manner, and fastened with bits of horsehair in such a manner that when the wolf swallowed the bait, in the shape of a piece of meat in which the needles were concealed, the fastening would give way and the needles spring apart and pierce the intestines and cause the beast's death. In our picture we see two men arranging the needles for the benefit of the wolves prowling about in the background. According to the "Master of Game" these contrivances, as well as "venemous powders," appear to have been in use also in England, for the Duke of York does not except these contrivances when translating Gaston de Foix's text into his quaint Chaucerian English.

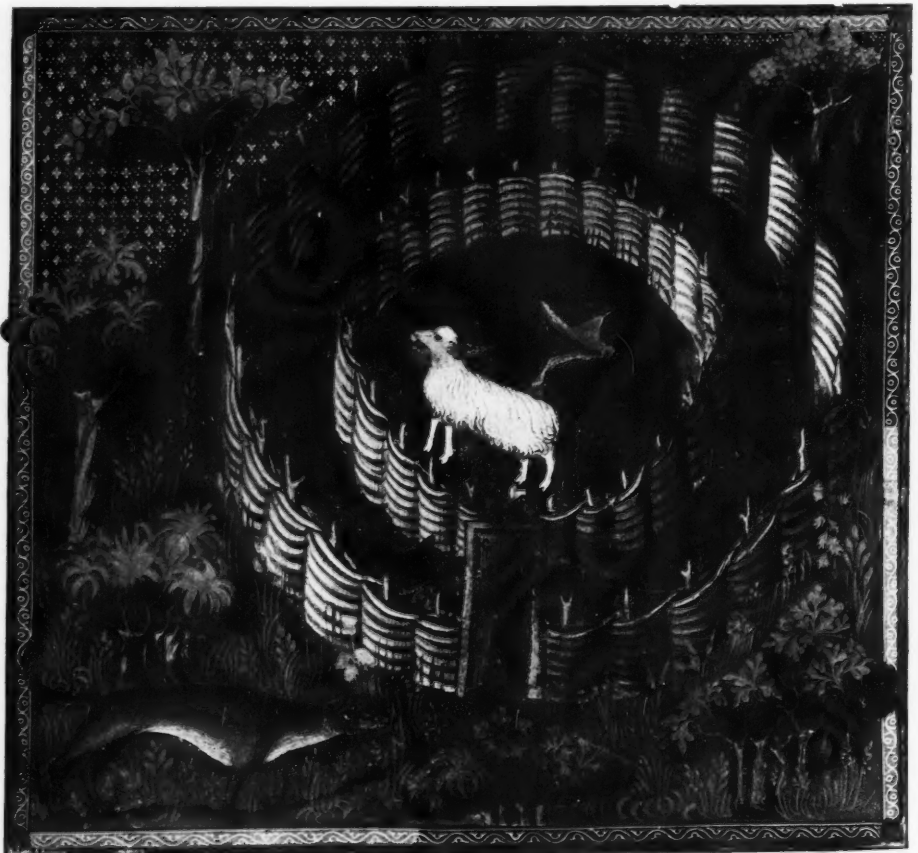
In England, according to Mr. Harting, the wolf disappeared in the reign of Henry VII., but in Ireland and Scotland only the last quarter of the eighteenth century witnessed their complete disappearance. Turbervile, in one of his few original passages, makes (A.D. 1575-76) the following amusing allusion to the wolf in the former country: "In Ireland (as I have heard) there are a great store of them: and because many Noblemen and Gentlemen have a desire to bring that country to be inhabited and civilly governed (and would to God there were more of the same mind) therefore I have thought good to set downe the nature and

manner of hunting at the Wolfe according to mine Author." A century later Blome (1686) writes as follows: "I shall bestow a Chapter or two in the discourse thereof, notwithstanding at present England. is not anoyed with any of those strong and great Devourers, which heretofore inhabited our woods and forests, but however Ireland is yet infected therewith in several parts, so that it will not be lost labour to treat thereof, but a benefit to that Kingdom as also many of our American plantations, where they frequent."

In the bulky literature that exists about the wolf we come across some curious beliefs. Take as an instance what the Duke of York puts down in his book as the "very truth": "There are two principal causes why they attack men, one is when they are old and lose their strength and cannot carry their prey as they were wont to do, then they mostly go for children, which are not difficult to take, for they need not carry them about but only eat them. And the child's flesh is more tender than is the skin or flesh of a beast. Or if men have been hanged or have been hanged so low that they may reach them, or when they fall from the gallows. And men's flesh is savoury and so pleasant that when they have taken to men's flesh they will never eat the flesh of other beasts, though they should die of hunger. For many men have seen them leave the sheep they have killed and eat the shepherd. When the wolf's bitch has her whelps

she will do no harm near where she has them. When men run greyhounds at the wolf he turns to look at them, and when he sees them he knows which will take him, and if he be full he voids his food while he is running to be lighter and swifter. They run so fast when they are empty that men have run four leashes of greyhounds, one after the other, and they could not overtake him for he runs as fast as any beast in the world."

It was a common belief, to which already Albertus Magnus in the thirteenth century refers, that, when the wolf attacked a horse or other large beast, he fills himself with earth, to make



AN INGENIOUS WOLF SNARE.

himself heavier, and when he has killed it he vomits the earth and satisfies himself with his prey. Wolf-hunting must have been a rare pastime already in the fourteenth century in England, but in France the destruction of this beast remained an important question until the last century. Up to the Revolution every district had its *louvetrie*, and heavy levies were made to keep up these establishments. Such perfectly authentic instances as that eighty-three people were killed by the notorious wolf of Gevaudan in 1765, and some 23,000fr. were spent upon its destruction, while on a certain week in September fourteen people were killed by wolves between Montmartre and the Porte St. Antoine, in the outskirts of Paris, tell their own tale. About the same period, in another part of France, Delisle de Moncel, a famous wolf-hunter, killed in one year one hundred and twenty wolves, while the Marquis of Enneval, another celebrated Normandy sportsman, killed upwards of a thousand in his lifetime. That wolves invaded the streets of Paris during the terrible visitation of the plague that added such horrors to those incidental to the defeat of the French army at Poitiers, has been graphically described by more than one old chronicler.

What fascination to our forefathers the earlier books on the wolf must have exercised is shown by the comparatively great number of such works and their numerous editions. Thus, of Clamorgan's book there appeared no less than 110 editions. According to this fine old sailor-sportsman the chase of the wolf was the finest of all chases, and reading his detailed accounts one can quite believe that the good sport one has one's self enjoyed following the diminutive prairie wolf in Western America, was but a feeble counterpart of what the real thing must have been like. W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN.

FROM THE FARMS.

THE DAY OF DECISION.

ON January 11th the members of the Royal Agricultural Society of England are to meet for the purpose of deciding whether the great show shall be held in 1905 or not. It is to be hoped that there will be a full attendance of members on this important occasion, and we believe that the majority of experienced agriculturists in Great Britain agree in desiring that the exhibition should be held as usual. The most violent critic of the society has never contended that this part of the work is not excellently done. On the contrary, it is freely admitted that no show of equal importance and interest is held in any other part of the world. It sets up an unsurpassed standard of breeding, and the distinction of winning honours at it is one very highly prized by all owners of pedigree stock. On the other hand, the losses incurred by the society have been so enormous that scarcely under any conceivable circumstances could they be allowed to go on. It is of little use for farmers and others who are interested to express a platonic wish that the show should be held as usual in 1905, unless they are prepared to come forward with an adequate guarantee. A scheme will have to be

formulated also for bringing the exhibitions of the society more into line with latter-day requirements. We cannot believe that



DRIVING WOLVES INTO NETS.

the difficulties are insuperable, and the general regret that the society should have got into difficulties will, perhaps, act as a means of stimulating the members to united efforts. It would not be regarded as anything but a misfortune by anyone who



SNARING WOLVES WITH NEEDLES.

has the best interests of husbandry at heart that evil should befall the premier society of Great Britain.

THE DECEMBER GALE.

The great south-westerly gale which raged on the night of December 30th was chiefly remarkable for the overflow caused by it in the Thames estuary, the damage done inland being trifling. It blew right into the mouth of the river, and gradually piled up the water in such a degree that, rising higher and higher as it went up stream, it came within 4ft. of the top of the Thames Embankment. But the serious damage was mainly lower down the river. An immense area of marsh both on the Kentish and Essex shores was reclaimed by the Dutch engineer in the days of James I., while Canvey Island was embanked rather later. Three years ago a similar storm did immense damage on the Essex side, from which in some places the waters have not receded yet. If the walls are breached nothing can save the sheep except by the use of boats. The cattle, as a rule, can keep their heads above water till the tide ebbs. Some years ago a whole flock of sheep made an attempt to escape the flood, and were so far successful that they reached a place where a bridge crossed one of the creeks. There their sense deserted them. The water only just covered the bridge, but the leading sheep tried to cross outside the rails instead of between them. Every sheep followed the leader, and the whole flock was drowned. Hares also are very helpless in these tidal floods. On the

"King's Marshes," near Orford, in Suffolk, a boatload of drowned hares were picked up after one of these catastrophes.

THE LAMBING SEASON.

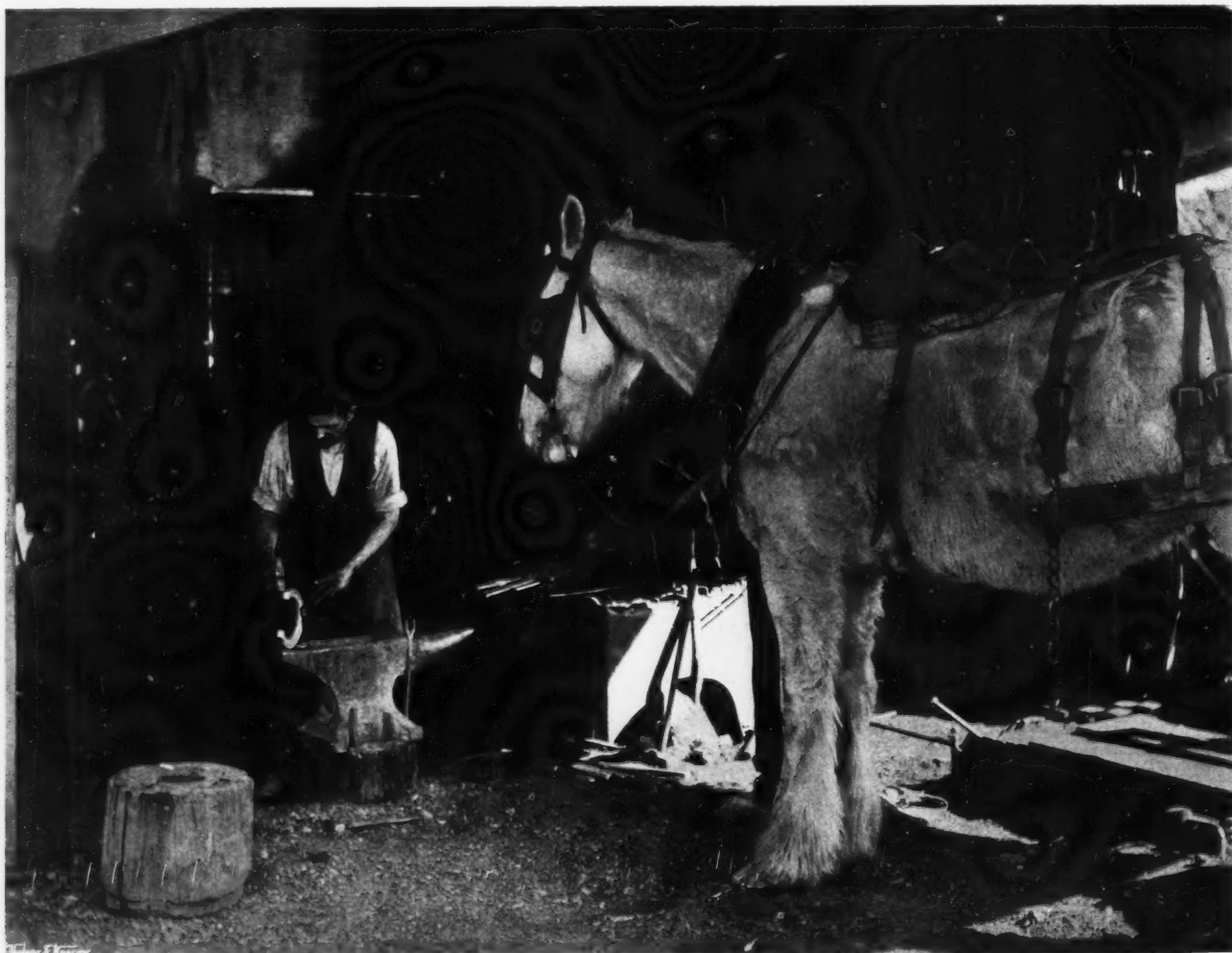
It is much too early in the year to make anything in the shape of a forecast of the crop of lambs, but in the early flocks the first have already begun to appear, and in fact on New Year's Day we had the pleasure of looking at a flock of ewes who had given birth among them to 180 lambs. They were in very good condition, and as far as appearances go up to, if not a little beyond, the average, and this is what we should expect from the previous season. The season before, as everyone knows, was an extremely bad one for sheep, owing to the continuous rains, but last year the ewes were doing very well from August onwards. They have had a delightful autumn, with no lack of pasture for the time of year in which to get into good condition. The chances therefore are that the excess in production this year will more than meet the deficiency of its predecessor. In fact, the sheep trade continues to be, as it has been for many generations, the sheet-anchor of English agriculture. Mutton has kept up to a satisfactory price, and the demand for English wool is likely to continue for some time to come, as we notice that the Australian flock-masters are only slowly making good the terrible losses entailed on them by the drought.

THE SHOERING-SMITH IN THE ANTIPODES.

It behoves the colonial farmer, no doubt, to be master of at least one trade, but at the same time it will be very useful to him to be jack of a good many; and amongst the useful crafts, one that he will not fail to find of value is that of the shoeing-smith. The pictures that illustrate this article were taken at the forges of professional smiths in New South Wales and in the North Island of New Zealand; but it is not by any means always the case that the colonist will find the professional shoeing-smith at his door, or even within feasible reach of him. Very often he will be thrown on the resources, such as they may be, of his own abilities, and in this case some little time spent at home in acquiring the rudiments of the shoeing art will be well used.

There is a vast difference both in science and in handicraft

between the work of one smith and that of another. It is in America, the land of quick wits and quick trotters, that the most scientific point has been reached. Following on the idea of the weighted toe-cap helping the horse to throw out its foot, so as to gain added length of stride, the Americans have adapted the underlying principle of that device—namely, that the foot will follow the weight—to the cure of faulty action. Thus, to give a very rough notion of their methods, in case of a horse with "cat-action," as it is called, that is to say, the kind of action which brings the feet working round and inward, they would concentrate the weight on the outside flange of the shoe, in order to lead the foot outward. Conversely, in the case of a horse that throws his feet very wide as they go forward, or that "dishes" as he lifts them, they would mass the weight on the



W. Reid.

FORGING THE SHOE.

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inner side of the shoe to straighten the action. Of course, many horses show these and the like faults of action with one leg only, and in that case the cure would naturally be applied only to the foot that is at fault. The details can be easily conceived if the principle is understood that the foot will go in the direction in which it is weighted.

These, of course, are among the niceties of the shoeing-smith's art, and the colonial farmer hardly will find it necessary to bother his head or his hand about them. In Australia and New Zealand the fast trotting is not studied, and most of the



W. Reid. *FITTING ON THE RED-HOT SHOE.* Copyright.

shoeing work will be on the extensive hoofs of the Clydesdales, or other heavy draught kinds, such as are seen in the pictures.

What is, perhaps, the first principle of shoeing is rather pleasantly suggested by the story in *Punch* of the man who complains to his bootmaker that his boots do not fit. "I think, sir," says the bootmaker politely, "that if you were to cut your corns the boots might fit better." To which the customer replies, with great indignation, "Confound it, do you think I am going to pare down my feet to fit your boots?" Some such indignant protest on part of the poor horses might be made by



W. Reid. *NAILING ON THE SHOE.* Copyright

some of those who fall into the inexperienced hands of the amateur shoemaker. The hoof is of such an easily cut substance, and the shoe is so hard and unyielding, that there is a constant temptation to go in the direction of least resistance and cut the hoof to fit the shoe, instead of fashioning the shoe to fit the foot. The smith whose portrait appears in most of these pictures has ready-made shoes of certain stock sizes. It is pretty certain that one or other of the shoes in stock will approximate to the size required; but approximation is not enough. The peculiar work that these horses have to do makes it essential that they should be well shod. The smithy, of rough construction, with roof of corrugated iron, is at Kiama, a small coast town about eighty miles south of Sydney. For the most part, this is

a richly pastoral district, supplying the city of Sydney with its dairy produce, and the character of the subsoil is generally sandstone. It is a district far less liable to suffer from prolonged drought than the stations farther inland. At Kiama, and from thence southward, the character of the sea-cliffs, where the subsoil is exposed, is of a very hard rock, and this rock is quarried and brought to Sydney and its vicinity for use in metal-ling the roads. In the hauling work there is much demand for horse



W. Reid.

THE BLACKSMITH.

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labour. It is labour over rough, stony ground, that is peculiarly severe on the feet of the horses, and a blacksmith is kept constantly on the spot and in constant work. In the picture that shows the smith engaged in taking off an old shoe, the outside of the humble smithy is seen, and also the quarry's wall at the back. The blur that obscures part of one of the pictures is due to the smoke coming from the horse's hoof when the standard shoe, red-heated, is applied to it. Unless, by a happy chance, the horse's foot is exactly of standard size, the shoe is taken off, reheated again, and hammered, while hot and malleable, into the shape that the smith's eye and experience, guided by the impression that the shoe left on the hoof at the first application, tell him will make it a good fit. If it should be a fit at the first attempt, or when finally hammered into the right shape, it is taken off and plunged into cold water to cool, before being nailed on the hoof.

Different smiths have different theories as to the number of nails requisite for safely fastening the shoe, varying from five as a minimum to nine as a maximum, and varying the number also with regard to the size of the hoof and the work that the wearer of the shoe will have to do. The proper driving of the nail and clamping over of its end—a mode that is thought to give

much more security, even if it is less neat in appearance, than breaking off the end and rasping it off flush—requires much care and dexterity. The detail, however, in which experience is of greatest value, and in which the amateur is most likely to go wrong, is perhaps one that has preceded the fitting of the shoe in the order of events, and that is the paring of the hoof. A certain paring away is necessary, to get rid of a deal of broken, useless excrescence; and lack of judicious paring tends to allow the foot to spread too broadly. On the other hand, the paring must not be overdone, so as to injure or remove any useful part of the "frog," which acts as such an invaluable safeguard against concussion. An excellent handbook on shoeing has been published (not very recently, but its counsels retain their value) by Colonel Fitz-Wygram.

The horse-breeding industry is quite a small one compared with the breeding of sheep, or even of cattle, both in Australia and in New Zealand. In the latter colony its proportions are relatively more important, and near Napier, in the North Island, where one of the pictures reproduced here was taken, there is a big farm of some 400 Clydesdales. Clydesdales are the type of which most of the colonial horses are bred, though a lighter stamp proved its value in the

South African Campaign. The home-abiding Briton, who hears great tales of the "Walers" in India and their buck-jumping abilities, is apt to suppose the export of small horses from the Antipodes to India to be greater than it is. "Broken to ride or drive" is a term that is used in a more liberal sense in the Colonies than it is at home, and some of the "broken" horses from Australia have done deeds in India in the way of getting rid of their riders that have thrown a lurid fame over all their kind. All of them do not submit themselves gently to the operation of the shoeing-smith, and not infrequently it is necessary to throw a refractory colt before he can be shod with anything like safety to the operator.

The horse-breeding industry is carefully fostered by Government, and some good sires have been imported. A census of horses in the colony is taken by the New Zealand Government every five years, and shows a steady increase at the rate of between 12 per cent. and 13 per cent. since 1886. At the enumeration made as lately as January, 1903, the number of horses was just about 287,000. The Clydesdales of the district of Oamaru, which is a limestone district, with all the constituents of good bone in its grass, are very fine animals, and their stock is constantly recruited from the Scottish home of their kind.

FARM LIFE IN NEW ZEALAND.

FARM life outside the British Isles in our experience has many attractions, and perhaps nowhere is it more attractive than, and yet so home-like as, in New Zealand. This may be due to the circumstance that, taken as a whole, New Zealand can be said to have a humid climate like that of the old country, but with a larger proportion of good working days. In this colony farming is, however, not the chief source of employment, for, according to the last census, only 9 per cent. of the total population is engaged in agriculture, and about 3 per cent. in pastoral pursuits; yet the agricultural and pastoral produce of New Zealand represents 62 per cent. of the colony's total exports.

Both islands, *i.e.*, the North and the Middle or South Island, yield about the same quota to the total exports of the colony, so that a description of farm life in New Zealand cannot be regarded as being especially applicable to one or the



W. Reiz.

THREE WORTHY PEOPLE.

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other. The North Island is, perhaps, more forest clad than the Middle Island; but though the latter has more plains and undulating downs, yet in various sections it also has a dense forest growth.

As a rule the lands that are now open and fit for settlement in New Zealand are covered with dense forests. These forests contain a mixture of trees of all kinds, from the giant kauri to the scrubby tea tree. The kauri is considered to be the most valuable tree in New Zealand, and, along with the rimu, is relied on for timber for home use as well as for export. The land that is under forest has to be first transformed into pasture land, and the felling of this timber is, therefore, the first step in colonial farm life. The land may be cleared by contractors for the sake of its timber, or by the settlers themselves, and is then a much slower operation. Clearing fern and scrub land costs about 7s. to 10s. an acre, while the cost of felling and burning ordinary bush varies from 25s. to 35s. per acre. To a young man the bush camp is attractive; he earns money and becomes an expert with the axe both as a tree-feller and a log-splitter. Life is lived out in the open air, and it is pleasant when some dependence can be placed on the weather, while dogs and gun are good companions. The tent passes into the bush hut, to be followed in due course by the slab cabin and the weather-board and tin shanty on the lines of the Scotch "but and ben."

The bush, when cut, is useful for building, fencing, and household purposes, and if the surplus be converted into charcoal it brings a return. Having cleared an area, and fenced it with split rails and posts, we now have the rudiments of a farm; yet it will be ten to fifteen years before ploughs can be used in such bush land, so that grazing must be the mainstay of the farmer for some time to come. After burning, therefore, grass seed is sown, and sheep are put on when the grass has obtained a good hold. In time, by gradual "logging up" and burning the fallen tree trunks, the land is cleared for the plough and general cultivation.

Dense forests in New Zealand have an economic value of their own for the timber supply they contain, and timber companies in clearing areas in turn assist settlement, for naturally settlement in such areas by farmers themselves is slow. In these timber areas the trees that have been felled by a gang or contractor's party are hauled to the mills, and haulage contracts are taken by the settlers. In some cases the haulage is done over tramways, and some of the New Zealand saw-mill companies have over ten to fifteen miles of such tramways in operation. Besides saw-mills, planing and moulding mills are also to be found, for houses in New Zealand, both in town and country, are of wood, and the forests supply the building wood necessary—the doors, sashes, and shingles; the fencing, the props, and planking used in mines; the sleepers for the railways, and the firewood.

Farm life as we understand the term in England is to be found in the plains of the Middle Island, and the main feature of it is that it centres in the farmer's family. The farmer cultivates the land in a different sense to the farming of the English tenant-farmer. The latter cultivates land by organising and directing hired labour on it. The former labours himself, and is assisted by his family. The employment of farm hired labour is, therefore, in such a country as New Zealand, reduced to the irreducible minimum, so that the hired man is more often a bird of passage than a fixture, and the farmer and his family are the workers. As wages are high, and land costs more in New Zealand than in Australasia, living has to be frugal and labour-saving appliances must be used. Methods of farming may be rough and ready, but as they save expenses they are to be preferred to those that prevail under other conditions. Because they are workers it does not follow that farmers and their families are rough and



W. Reid.

DINNER-TIME.

Copyright

uncouth. The New Zealanders are well educated, the farm-houses are at least comfortable if they cannot be said to be artistic, and the homestead is practically self-sustaining in respect to food supply.

One can picture getting out of the train at some small local station and being met there either by the farmer or one of his sons. Adjourning to the local store and hotel, one takes one's seat in the American buggy, or waggon, and is driven some distance along a fair made road, which is soon left for what are by courtesy also called roads, but are mere tracks, and in due course by devious ways the farm we want is reached. Here the visitor will get a warm, frank, and honest welcome. He will find the farmhouse a plain wooden building with a shingle or galvanised iron roof, the outhouses also being of wood and corrugated iron. The fields or paddocks will be large, and the cultivation carried on will indicate mixed farming. It will also be observed that, as far as possible, everything is home-made, from the bread we get to the hundred-and-one requirements of the farm.

The two chief industries in New Zealand at present are frozen meat and factory-made butter, and their influence is to be seen on most of the farms. There will, for instance, be a flock of good, cross-bred sheep, for such sheep, if of good quality, are in demand for the frozen-meat trade, and there will also be a small herd of cows whose milk will be sent to the creameries.

The New Zealand frozen-meat trade deals principally with sheep; in fact, the amount of beef that is frozen, or chilled, would not represent more than 15 per cent. of the total output. Driving sheep to market would therefore be a more characteristic scene than driving cattle to market, especially when the sheep are being driven to the meat-freezing works. The cattle are crosses, the predominant cross being the shorthorn.

Dairying, which flourishes throughout New Zealand, is carried on, the returns show, much more in the North Island than in the Middle Island. A dairy farm in New Zealand does not, however, entail keeping cows in byres or stables; the chief difficulty that exists, where there is a large herd, is in getting milkers, for, as already stated, hired labour is dear. On a dairy farm the work carried out is mainly that of breeding, keeping, and milking cows, while the skimming of the milk and making the cream into butter are the work of factories. Fairly good milking cattle give about 500 gallons of milk per year, and about 1lb. of butter is obtained from every 2½ gallons of milk. Life on a dairy farm is perhaps not so solitary as on an ordinary farm, for there is the daily or tri-weekly visit to the factory. Still, the home life depends on one's self. The nearness of neighbours is a question of physical geography. For instance, farms are closer together in the older settled districts than in the new, also on the plains and downs than in the forest-clad areas.

Farm life in New Zealand means work for all the family—father and sons, mother and daughters. The living will be plain and simple, and in most cases abundant, but all who sup together must work for their meat. The baker's, butcher's, and fishmonger's cart will not call, and the groceries you can get at the store, even if they do not extend beyond salt, pepper, and mustard, flour, sugar, and oil, will be at prices that make them luxuries. The farmer and his family must raise their own vegetables and fruit; look after the horses, cattle, sheep, and poultry; do the clearing, draining, road and bridge making; and plough, sow, and reap. It does not follow that to do this one has to live the life of a boor devoid of enjoyments. The sense of liberty, independence, and freedom which generally prevails (except when you are in debt to the storekeeper, or mortgages have followed bad seasons) gives to colonial farm life an attractiveness which is not to be found in the Old World.

R. HEDGER WALLACE.

THE KING OF THE TITS.

"AMONG the blind the one-eyed is king," says the French proverb; and among our tits, whose very name, etymologists tell us, is a record of their smallness, the great tit (*Parus major*) passes for a big bird. Yet he is really less in size than a sparrow, and it is his striking dress, black hood, white shirt-collar, French grey coat, and yellow waistcoat, which make him such a striking member of the small-bird fraternity, especially as his consort wears the same clothes.

Fortunately, unlike so many of our more beautifully-coloured birds, he is very common, not only in the country, but in towns wherever trees may be found; even in London he may be seen at times, and I have noted him as late as midsummer, so that he probably breeds there. He is better suited than almost any of our small birds for town life, being most omnivorous in appetite, and active and plucky enough to be in comparatively little danger from the sparrow, though that bird's power of combination makes him irresistible to such species as his strong bill and bulldog courage are not sufficient to overcome in single combat.

The oxeye, as the great tit is as often called, except in books, is a bit of a ruffian himself, and, being possessed of claws like steel springs and an uncommonly hard beak, which he uses with much effect as a pick, can and does commit atrocities in the way of avicide in captivity, as many a fancier can bear testimony. A century ago Bechstein observed that he had known one of these birds attack and kill a quail—a bird twice its own size, and no mean fighter to boot—and more recently Dr. A. G. Butler has related how he kept nine great tits in two large cages, where they eliminated each other till only one was left in each. Want of room compelled him to try these together, but their ferocity was not appeased, and the very next morning a few fragments were all that were left of one. The concentrated cannibal which remained lived to moult twice; but, curiously enough, it lost its beauty of plumage, becoming very pale, and in particular assuming a dirty cream-coloured breast instead of a yellow one. Lest this should be rashly attributed to retributive justice, it may be mentioned that Mr. J. G. Keulemans describes a very similar result in captive oxeys which have been allowed to indulge in milk. Of this many insectivorous birds are very fond in captivity, although it is such an unnatural food; and its effect on the great tit is to discharge the yellow colour from the plumage, turning the yellow-green of the back to a dull grey, and bleaching the breast to white. In this state the bird somewhat resembles the Indian grey tit (*Parus minor*), and thus the



H. Lazenby.

FOOD FOR THE FAMILY.

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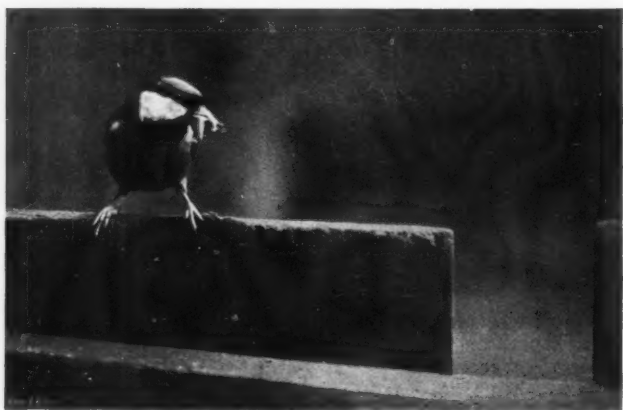
change is interesting, as showing on how little specific difference sometimes depends—in this case little more than the presence or absence of a fugitive yellow pigment.

Unfortunately for the character of the oxeye, it has to be admitted that the often-brought plea of "changed circumstances of captivity" will not acquit him; for he is known to murder other small birds, and even bats, when at liberty, and to fight with his own kind until blood is drawn freely.

I do not, of course, recommend anyone to cage a familiar bird like this, except temporarily, for the purpose of some particular observation; for, although the bird bears captivity well, when once he has convinced himself that he cannot get out, it is far more pleasant for all parties to cultivate the oxeye's acquaintance in the open. This can readily be done at this time of the year, when a half-picked bone or a head of sunflower hung out will speedily attract any individuals that may be in the vicinity. And in a favourable locality the birds will show themselves quite willing to continue the acquaintance thus begun, even in summer. This has been well demonstrated by Mr. Granville Sharp in his charming little book, "Birds in a Garden." He found that old birds of this species were glad of help when bringing up a brood, finding, when the grown young were still clamouring for food, that a piece of nut would stop their mouths for some time, since, though lazily expecting food to be put into their bills, they knew quite enough to hold a big piece down with their feet and chip at it with their bills in orthodox tit fashion. It is, indeed, very characteristic of the tits to swallow their food in small morsels, in a manner very unlike the greedy haste with which most insectivorous birds bolt it in large pieces. Herein, as well as in their habit of holding things under their feet, they much resemble their relatives, the crows; for everyone must have noticed the mincing, finicking way in which birds of the crow tribe feed when they have time, though they will pouch big pieces for future discussion when pressed at the moment.

The great tit is, indeed, a jay in miniature, and, as some foreign jays are not much bigger than blackbirds, and the splendid black and yellow sultan tit of the Himalayas (*Parus sultaneus*) is nearly as large as a thrush, even the size does not make much distinction between the two groups.

Most tits, however, differ very markedly from most crows in their habit of building in holes; and the great tit in particular is most accommodating in his ideas of what constitutes a suitable cavity. The bird which built year after year in a



H. Lazenby.

A LITTLE DOUBTFUL.

Copyright.

used letter-box at Rowfant is familiar to every *habitué* of the bird gallery at the South Kensington Museum; and this year I was shown, at Swanley Horticultural College, a great tit brooding peacefully in an old pump, and quite unmoved when the top was taken off to allow of the view.

Mr. Lazenby's photographs show a bird which has a brood in an old iron pipe, and I have seen a similar site selected myself. One would think that tobogganing down on the brood and scrambling up again every time attention had to be paid them was a game hardly worth the candle; but, to an acrobatic nature like the oxeye's, such things seem trifling. One good point about this cheerful acceptance of unfurnished lodgings on the bird's part is that it is quite easy to induce him to colonise one's garden, a firmly fixed water-tight box, with an inch-wide hole in the front, being all that is required. A brood reared about the premises will get delightfully tame. Mr. Sharp's young friends would freely enter his room in search of food, thus almost emulating a captive hand-reared bird of this species I have been told of, which, allowed the liberty of the kitchen, used to help itself to whatever it fancied on the table, and retire to rest in a jug on the dresser! But it is as a subject for aviculture in the open that the oxeye especially shines, and I hope this sketch may induce some readers who do not as yet know him well to cultivate his acquaintance.



H. Lazenby.

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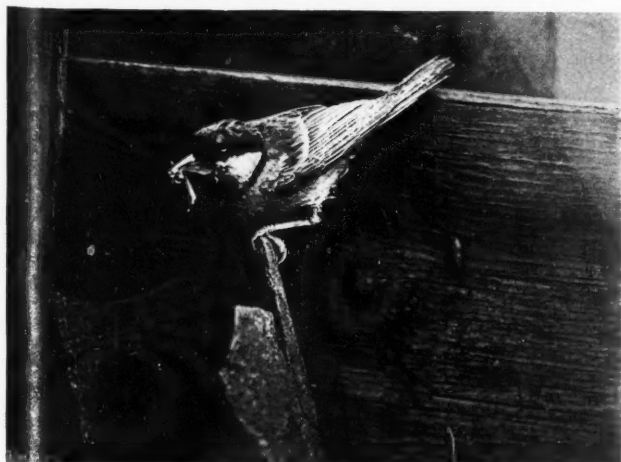
RATIONS TO HAND.

F. FINN.

OLD LABAN.

AFTER sixty years' labour, much of it lonely labour, on the land, an old farm hand can always rely on being provided—by the Guardians of the Poor—with plenty of company during his declining days; but old Laban Tovell, who is in his eightieth year, prefers to end his days alone, and considers himself fortunate, in that his sons are "doing so well in the Shires," that he is in a position to do so. To a man who has often spent weeks together with no companion save his plough horses, and who knows what it means to be a shepherd on the High Ridge uplands during the lambing season, it is no hardship to live alone in a cottage beside an unfrequented by-road, though a townsman condemned to such an existence would probably find it unbearable. During a long life in a rural district, where the inhabitants of half-a-dozen adjoining parishes number less than four hundred, he has learnt, like a Cheviot shepherd, to be content with the companionship of his dog, and, unconsciously, he has cultivated a faculty for close observation which, now that he spends several hours of every day in a chair by his cottage window, keeps him fairly well informed as to what is going on in the fields for a mile or more around him. Movements of men and animals, that are unimportant to a casual beholder, have for him a clear significance. Without knowing it, he has trained his ear to detect a difference between the rumbling of one waggon and another, while the direction of the rooks' flight in the morning is enough to tell him where ploughing has begun for the day.

Content as he is to live alone, and see, day after day, a



H. Lazenby.

A NICE FAT WORM.

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monotonous stretch of almost featureless country with which he has been familiar for many years, he is not averse to chatting with a visitor who does not trouble him with unwelcome condolences. To a patient listener his remarks are chiefly reminiscent, and, notwithstanding that his life has been uneventful, they are not without interest, for he has lived long enough to have seen great changes in rural life. Like most of the old farm hands encountered in real life, he has little to say in favour of those "good old times" about which some people who never knew them are fond of talking. The labourer, he will tell you, was never better off than he is to-day, however much room for improvement there may be in his condition. His working hours, save in exceptional cases, are not so many as were his father's and grandfather's, nor does he have to work so hard as they did. Pointing to a field which slopes down from the crest of the Ridge, he said, last harvest-time:

"You see them men at work with th' hoss-rake. Well, in my young time there worn't sich a thing as a hoss-rake in th' county. All th' raking had to be done wi' hand-rakes which we dragged along by straps over our shoulders. There was no riding round th' fild on a rake behind a hoss in those days. And we knew nothing about drills ayther. At that time we had to do as well as we could wi' a dibbler, sich as that yonder." He pointed to an iron implement resembling a swollen poker, which was standing in a corner of the room. "As for troshin' (threshing), he went on, "I ha' used a flail many a time in that owd barn you passed by at th' top of th' driftway; but I'd rather work wi' a flail for a month than wi' one of th' owd kind of troshin' machines for a day. Th' first machine as I had



H. Lazenby.

BRINGING UP SUPPLIES.

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anything to do wi' had to be worked by hand, th' drum being turned by a wheel wi' a handle, like a turnip-cutter. Ah! that was hard work, if ever there was any. Even a strong man was glad of a rest at th' end of his ten minutes' spell of turning, and more than one poor fellow had his heart broke by them machines. After that they had a trosher that was worked by th' feet, like a treadmill; but at th' time when our master brought that on to th' farm I was a-shepherdin', so I had nowt to do wi' 't."

Some time between 1840 and 1850 he was a team-man on a large marsh-bordering farm, and for a year or two he lived in the farmhouse with two or three other farm hands, though the custom had ceased to be general in that part of the country. The farmhouse, though a very old one even when he lived in it, is still standing, and when he saw it a few years ago, he found its large, low-ceiled kitchen unaltered since he used to sit by its wide, open hearth on winter evenings. Even the furniture was the same, for the house was still occupied by the same family, the farmer being a grandson of Laban's former master. In the middle of the kitchen stood a long oak table, that could only be moved by the united efforts of four men; in one corner was a tall corner-cupboard black with age; near it was a huge "box" mangle, reputed to be weighted with some old tombstones; the same brass candlesticks stood at the ends of the high mantel-piece, and above them, resting on a pair of wooden pegs, was the same old flintlock gun. For a while the old man sat on one of the same

heavy, straight-backed chairs on which, more than fifty years before, he had often fallen asleep after a long day's tramp beside his team; but of all the old companions with whom he had spent the evenings, after seeing that the horses were locked up safe for the night, not one could he hear of as being still alive. "I should fare rarely lonesome living there now," he said. "I'd rather be here by myself, though they do say as how th' owd woman what had this cottage afore I come here was a witch, and used to overlook folks as she took a grudge against."

Old Laban is no "scholar," for he never went to school, and was only ten years old when he first went to work on the land. Until he became a team-man he lived with his parents, but he had a sister who, at the age of thirteen, was employed as "servant wench" in a farmhouse twenty miles away from her home. Only once a year could this child see her parents, and that was on "Mothering Sunday"—the day when the girls and lads who were "out at service" were given a holiday, so that they might go home and see their mothers. He has heard that there is a society that "looks after th' poor childer nowadays," and sees that "them as ill-treats 'em gets their deservs." Such a society, he says, would have found plenty of work to do in the "good owd times," for the way in which the little "servant wenches" were knocked about by their mistresses was "shameful," and the conduct of their masters, he hints, was sometimes far worse. The labourers who lived "in the house" saw something of what was going on; but, as a rule, they were afraid to say anything. "There was no lack of labourers in those days, and them what let their tongue run too easy soon found themselves on the tramp."

The conclusion one draws from most of the old man's reminiscences is that Crabbe was right when he wrote that

"The Muses sing of happy Swains
Because the Muses never knew their pains."

But occasionally the old labourer's remarks are of a more cheerful nature. "Times has altered," he said, recently, "and in most ways for th' better. No one in his senses could say as how they hav'n't. Working on a farm is werry diff'rent to what it used to be, and it aint likely ever to be so bad as it was if farmers don't go too far wi' their new-fangled ways." About the "ways" that threaten to become too "new-fangled," he is not quite clear; but in regard to some modern methods of land cultivation he appears to hold opinions similar to those of another old labourer who, when told by his employer that the time was coming when he would be able to carry in one waist-coat pocket sufficient concentrated essence of manure for an acre of land, remarked, "Yes, master; and you'll be able to carry th' crop in th' tuther."



ARTESIAN BORE AT GIL-GIL, NEW SOUTH WALES.

THE ARTESIAN WATER SUPPLY OF AUSTRALIA.

THOUGH the outside world has been thoroughly familiarised with the effects of Australia's *bête noire*, the drought, it is probably not so well acquainted with the fact that she possesses a great natural compensation in the form of an inexhaustible supply of good artesian water. It will, no doubt, surprise many that more use was not made of this priceless boon during the awful time when the stock were dying of starvation and thirst, and people were abandoning their holdings. But the question of artesian water supply is not one which can be attacked off-hand, and as yet it is only in its infancy in Australia. It is but twenty-five years since the first bore was sunk, and the subsequent progress cannot be regarded otherwise than as satisfactory. Queensland and New South Wales are the States which have displayed the most activity in this matter; all attempts to strike artesian water in Victoria have failed, while South Australia and Western Australia are pushing along as fast as their means will allow.

In Queensland, up to June 30th, 1903, there were 960 completed bores, all but 102 having been put down by private enterprise. From these there is an estimated daily supply of 385,400,000 gal., the largest single flow in that State, and, indeed, in the whole of Australia, being 6,000,000 gal. New South Wales is a very bad second to her northern neighbour, having attempted only about 280 bores, thirty of which must be marked down as failures. The approximate daily flow of underground water is 117,000,000 gal., besides a considerable amount which is available by pumping from sub-artesian wells. The recent drought, however, has awakened the Mother State to the necessity for increased activity in this regard. Of her total area of 310,700 square miles, 79,000,000 acres are within the arid portion, and 26,000,000 acres of this division are defined as "Cretaceous" or artesian water bearing; that is to say, bores sunk anywhere within this area will, in a majority of cases, tap the subterranean basin. Usually the water will rise to the surface and spout out with great force and in undiminishing volume, but occasionally the main body of the supply is missed, and the water rises only part of the way up the bore. Such are sub-artesian wells, and by pumping they can be made to serve a variety of useful purposes. A bore may have a flow of a mere dribble amounting to a few thousand gallons in a day, or a strong, steady output of one or two millions, or even six in the case of a Queensland bore already mentioned, never varying from year to year except when checked by the stop-cock. Cases have been known where bores have "petered out," so to say, but the cause is usually to be found in defective pipe casing, something dropped down the passage during drilling operations, or even fossils and live denizens of the subterranean basin being forced into the pipe by the water. The temperature of the water at the surface varies from 80 deg. to 202 deg. Fahr.

Artesian boring is a slow and costly operation, and can only be undertaken by wealthy landowners or the Government, acting on behalf of a combination of settlers, who guarantee the interest on the outlay. The cost naturally varies in accordance with the character of the strata to be pierced by the diamond and calyx drills, and the occurrence of unavoidable accidents, such as when the machinery breaks in the bore, is a very serious factor, which occasionally means a delay of months. The average depth of bores constructed by the Government in New South Wales is 1,454 ft., ranging from 165 ft. to 4,086 ft., and the cost, including actual boring, casing, and incidentals, averages £2,620 per bore, or £1 18s. 6d. per foot. The rate of progress is also a variable quantity, ranging from 4 ft. to over 20 ft. per day; thus a bore might take three or twelve months to complete. Very frequently a flow of water is struck at a comparatively shallow depth, increasing many fold as the shaft is carried deeper. Queensland has so far the honour of possessing the deepest bore, that at Whitewood, on Bimerah Station, reaching 5,045 ft.

The importance to an arid country

like Australia, which has either no rain at all or too much at the wrong time, of such a supply of available water as these bores indicate, cannot be over-rated. So far it has been looked upon more for its use for stock-watering purposes than as the ultimate solution of the problem of how to settle the agriculturist profitably on the vast interior areas of fertile soil. As a general thing, the rivers of Australia are poor, and not to be relied upon after a spell of dry weather. When they cease to run, as they almost invariably do in the summer, the process of evaporation quickly reduces them to a chain of pools, and the danger to weak stock of becoming bogged is only too frequently realised. An intelligent policy of artesian development will place the farmer and the grazier above dependence on the caprice of the elements. Around the outlet pipe of a bore is usually dug a small excavation, with channels or drains leading from it to conduct the water wherever it is required. This is handier than a river both for stock-watering and irrigation, for whereas a man may have a bore drain running through his paddocks, it is not given to everybody to have a river on his property, nor is one permitted to draw off the water of a river at his own sweet will. A paddock so watered is estimated to carry 20 per cent. more sheep at less cost than in ordinary conditions.

The old prejudice against irrigation as an operation not practicable when large areas are to be dealt with is fast being dispelled in Australia. California and Mexico have shown her the way in a most convincing manner. There thousands of acres are being irrigated, not only for market crops, but also for grass, and it is found that by this method the stock-carrying capacity of the land is increased one-third. But Nature has been so kind to Australia in the supply of vast areas of soil which will grow anything if it rains, that the average Australian settler is more inclined to wait for the rain than to go to expense to make himself less dependent on it. Such irrigation as has been tried in connection with artesian bores in New South Wales and Queensland has been attended with gratifying success. It used to be thought that artesian water was so heavily impregnated with mineral solutions that it would cake the ground and kill the vegetation. This fear has not been found correct. The irrigation farm at Pera bore in Western New South Wales is to-day producing quantities of excellent fruits and other products belonging to the temperate and torrid zones, and in a district that twenty years ago was a mere desert. During the worst part of the late drought in the summer of 1902 the writer drove through some of the Western districts, which were then absolutely paralysed. Practically no grass would be seen for days together, nor any trace of sheep, except the bones and carcasses of those which had succumbed. But what a contrast when we passed through a station which had a flowing bore! The mere soakage from the conduits raised a luscious crop of grass as high as the horses' bellies. The cattle were feeding contentedly, and the contrast which this oasis afforded seemed cruel.

As to the origin of this artesian water, it is, of course, primarily due to the rainfall. An enormous quantity of each fall never reaches the rivers, but soaks into the earth to replenish the vast storage reservoir which is already there. Some extraordinary theories have been advanced as to the probable source of the energy which causes the water to flow upwards with such pressure; but as nothing conclusive seems to have been arrived at among the experts, the subject need not be entered upon here.

It may be interesting to note that London derives a portion of its water supply from artesian sources, the fountains in



DOLGELLY BORE, MOREE, NEW SOUTH WALES.

Trafalgar Square being directly supplied from the porous beds, which are at the base of the tertiary formation. Numerous flowing bores have been sunk in and around Paris and other parts of France.

IN THE GARDEN.

PLANTING IXIAS.

THESE charming bulbous flowers are not much grown in English gardens, partly, we think, because the growing of them is not understood. In warmer countries than our own *Ixias* may be planted in autumn with impunity, while in the changeable climate of Britain, the resting season may be prolonged with advantage so far as the general flowering is concerned. It is best to plant them out in the early part of the year in a sunny and raised position. In most private gardens there is a vinery, and sometimes also a raised border outside it. No better place than this can be found. Place a frame 6ft. long and 4ft. wide in such a way that the border is not unduly trodden by the subsequent visits to the frame, and place within the latter 1ft. of deep, well-enriched soil, peat, leaf-mould, loam, and very old dung—the latter to be passed through a sieve of $\frac{1}{2}$ in. mesh—in nearly equal parts. It will be helpful if a moderate layer of old cow manure be first placed in the frame, the soil

mixture to follow. Plant the bulbs from early February to the first week in March, and, with the soil in good condition, no water will be required for a fortnight. Where sufficient bulbs are being planted to fill the frame, it will be found a good plan to first place in about 8in. of the soil, which should be made moderately firm. Give a free sprinkling of sand, say, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. over all; and, finally, with the assistance of a 3in.-wide rail, or the garden rake handle, arrange the bulbs at intervals. A light pressure into the sand will keep them in position. When all are placed, cover in with the remaining soil. In finishing off the soil do not slope it, and the same rule should apply to the placing of the bulbs. Let these two surfaces be quite level. It is essential that the upper surface should be so, because later ample watering will be made when growth is in full swing.

ROSE NOTES.

Mme. Edmee Cocteau.—Beautiful Roses of vigorous growth will always be welcome, whatever their flower-colouring may be. This variety will, we think, surpass *Climbing Captain Christy*; the flowers are larger and decidedly an improvement upon this old favourite. What splendid-headed standards such varieties will make. The *Baroness Rothschild* race grown in this form will soon be a thing of the past, although we may part with them rather reluctantly. *Mme. Edmee Cocteau* will make an ideal pillar Rose either for outdoors or the Rose-house. There are now four Roses of light and deep pink colouring suitable for this purpose, namely, *Climbing Caroline Testout*, *England's Glory*, *Climbing Belle Siebrecht*, and the variety under notice. *England's Glory*, if somewhat wanting in form, is, nevertheless, an excellent Rose; and we cannot speak too highly of *Climbing Belle Siebrecht*. Every fair-sized garden should possess a row or two of this Rose across the kitchen garden if needful, as it will give an abundance of its lovely buds and huge flowers, and this, too, in early June, when they are often most useful.

Alice Lindsell.—Those who have seen this Hybrid Tea will not forget it. The flower is of immense size, perfection in form, and suitable for exhibition. Although only distributed in 1902, *Alice Lindsell* has attained a high position in the Rose analysis of 1904, coming thirteenth in the list of Hybrid Perpetuals and Hybrid Teas. One wishes there were a more distinct departure in the novelties of Hybrid Teas. Some of them are much alike; but we are sanguine enough to believe that the next few years will witness some wonderful developments in this glorious race.

Mons. Joseph Hill.—This new Hybrid Tea Rose is very handsome. It is as good, and, perhaps, even better than *Prince de Bulgarie*. The colour is intense, the centre of the flower shaded with flaming orange, and the outer petals of a lovely salmon pink. It is these wonderful combinations of tints that impart such a charm to the Hybrid Teas of recent introduction. When forced they are exceptionally beautiful, and in many cases yield flowers quite different to those produced outdoors. For pots the Hybrid Teas are more serviceable as decorative plants than the Teas, as the flowers, which are on erect stems in most cases, are much better displayed. We were

interested in the beautiful variation of colour found in Frau Lilla Rautenstranch, a Rose far too lovely to have such an ugly name. Under glass the carary yellow tint was very pronounced, whereas outdoors little of this is seen. To anyone about to embark in the culture of pot Roses, we would strongly advise them to procure these newer Hybrid Teas, not forgetting the older sorts, such as Antoine Rivoire, Mme. Abel Chatenay, and Caroline Testout.

THE IBERIS.

For the rockery or the front of the herbaceous border there are at least eight varieties of hardy Iberis, or what are more commonly known as evergreen Candytufts, worthy of cultivation. The common sempervirens is, perhaps, the most free growing, and certainly is a wonderfully profuse flowering sort of undoubted hardiness. A large patch when in flower in the month of May is a fine sight on the rockery, or as an edging to a path where it can ramble over a few stones it is equally useful. Garrexiana is more compact in growth, and has larger petals than the type; for these two reasons it is worthy a place. I. g. flore-pleno produces small heads of bloom, but in quantity, and of the purest white. I. Little Gem grows but 6in. high, is very compact and free, and the blooms individually are small. For the rockery this variety is especially useful. I. tenoreana has compact flower-heads—white, purple-tinted, very pretty, but none too hardy in all situations. I. correaefolia is, perhaps, the most desirable of the white-flowered varieties. The flower-heads are compact, with large individual blossoms, especially white. I. gibraltarica flowers early in April, is of straggling growth, and really more half-hardy than a distinct perennial. The flower-heads are exceptionally large, the colour is attractive—white suffused with pink or red. I. Snowflake is an even improved form of I. correaefolia, which is sufficient recommendation for its inclusion in any collection, no matter how small. Propagation is easily effected by inserting cuttings of flowerless shoots in a cold frame in spring or in August. As the bulk of sorts produce seed-pods freely, it is wise to remove these when flowering is past, to encourage a free growth for next season's flower crop. Any good garden soil will grow these Iberises well; in the case of heavy retentive soil, grit added freely will be an advantage.

RANDOM NOTES.

Chrysanthemum ornatum.—For the cool greenhouse at this season of the year this plant should become popular. Seeds of it were received at Kew in 1895 from the University Botanic Garden, Tokio, and for several years it was grown in the open air, where it grew vigorously, but was cut down by frost before flowering. When grown in a similar way to the popular decorative Chrysanthemums, plants of it in 6in. or 7in. pots can be had in flower at Christmas. As it branches freely, it requires no stopping. The white margin of the leaf no doubt accounts for the name *C. marginatum* being sometimes given to it. The corymbs of flowers consist of sometimes as many as fifteen to eighteen flower-heads, which average about 1½in. across. The disc florets are yellow, and the ray white. A native of Japan. It is figured in the *Botanical Magazine*, Tab. 7965.

Begonia polyantha.—This Mexican Begonia is a very useful free-flowering winter plant. Cuttings rooted in spring and potted on as required to 7in. or 8in. pots are some 2ft. or more in height in early winter. The light pink flowers are very freely produced. If given an occasional dose of manure-water they will continue flowering for six months or more. During foggy weather, like many of the Begonias, this plant suffers badly, but with the coming of brighter days it soon recovers.

Clipping Yew Trees.—As this answer to a correspondent may be of general interest, we print it: In the absence of any information as to the size of the plants composing the hedge and the length of time they have been planted, we are only enabled to give general information on the matter. Assuming that your hedge is composed of good sturdy bushes about 1yd. high, and planted 2ft. or a little less apart, all that will be needed in the way of pruning for the first two years is to shorten back with a knife any shoots that show a tendency to grow wild. The third season clipping may begin. It is best done in April, and until the required height is attained the top should not be much interfered with. After that, however, the top is best if trimmed in a partially pointed form.

AT THE BACK OF THE WAVES.

FROM the end of a promontory, running far into the sea, you may watch the movements and aspects of the great water as it is not possible to study them from any other point. In a boat beyond the billows you are too low to appreciate the effect of the breakers over the intervening swell of the unbroken billows. It is seldom that an islet in the sea is so kindly placed as to give you just the vantage-point you want; and when the billows are in the mood of their greatest pride and splendour there is more than trouble, there is danger, in the landing from a rowing-boat on one of the rocky islets, be it placed never so kindly.

The aspect of the waves as they come thundering on, rearing

white crests and menacing to trample you under foot in their onset upon the shore, is glorious, but it is familiar. How glorious it might be but for its familiarity must remain a subject of speculation to the great majority of us who take any share in the heritage of comparatively easy locomotion which is the possession of our time. There are few of us to whom the sea beating on the shore is any new thing. "Time cannot wither, nor custom stale, its infinite variety," but, for all that, it would doubtless strike us far more forcibly with its magnificence if it first came upon us when our appreciative faculties were of adult growth.

Well though we know that most familiar aspect of the sea with its billows racing towards us, here, where we sit, or lie, on



F. J. Mortimer.

ATLANTIC WAVES.

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W. Reid.

AT THE ANTIPODES.

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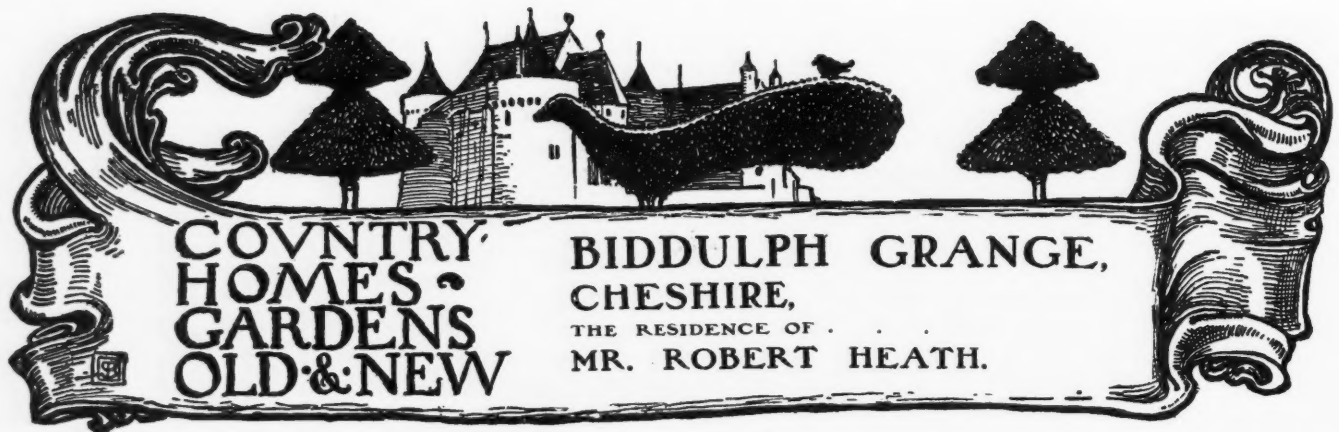
the thin yellow sward of the promontory head, it requires but the smallest exercise of the faculty of observation to perceive that we have the sea now in a totally new relation to our optic sense, a relation that gives singular impressions. Here, instead of billows racing down towards us (we know it as a scientific fact that the billows do not race, that their motion is but truly undulatory; but what matters the scientific truth in its comparison with the personal impression?)—here we are at the billows' backs; we see them hurrying away, fleeing from us, like things afraid. A study of the sea gives one an irresistible leaning to animism; it is impossible to believe but that the varied movements of this many-currented ocean are actuated by some free volition. The waves dash their awful, yet their impotent, might on the promontory's head, so that the very ground that forms our seat shakes and throbs again; their broken mass swirls past, surging over the rocky foundations of the headland; then they go on, away, in endless pursuit each of each. As one lies and watches, with a foot wedged for security in a rocky crevice where a sea-pink grows, there comes a hypnotic influence from their ceaseless motion, a slight dizziness of the brain. It seems less as if the sea were moving and we still, than we in a swift, yet smooth, unbroken movement seaward, constantly borne by unseen, almost unfelt, agency far out into the ocean, yet never leaving quite behind us that rolling hill and valley country of the sea in-shore. There is discomfort in this sense of unreality. It is well to open the eyes wide, to stamp the foot against the rocky convincing substance of the solid earth, to sniff the keen salt air, to hear the sea-birds crying shrilly. Then we know that we are in our old world again, and not in any unsubstantial land of shifting scenes.

All the waves go on a like plan. We spoke of the sea's movements of apparent caprice as disposing the mind to animism; yet the very fact that we lie here in security, and confident that we are secure, is evidence enough of our boundless faith in the obedience of this unstable element to the laws that govern. We express that faith by our confidence that no one wave will reach up for us greatly higher than the last, confidence that the whole body of ocean is not in reality, as it certainly is in appearance, beating and bearing down on that particular portion of the shore that we have taken for our throne, but that all is held in order by some great hand—that "God's in His heaven; All's right with the world." That is the immense faith to which we bear

our witness by the calm confidence in which we sit quiet there where the topmost crest of a wave cannot get us, but only an occasional fleck of wind-borne foam be carried with a salt smack against our faces.

As each wave goes by it leaves, beyond the snowy foam and fury in which it broke itself upon the headland's rocks, a pattern of froth and white water like lacework, of which we may try, but shall try in vain, to find the pattern. It shifts every instant as we look at it; yet through it all we have the sense that there is some unity of design, if only we could find the key to it. But the design constantly escapes us by its constant changes. The pattern is gone, even before we can say, "There it is!" In the formation of the waves the unity of the plan, the obedience to the same law of design, is less elusive. There is a likeness in form and motion, yet even here is no vain repetition, no identity of one wave with another, so that you can say, "It is precisely what I have seen before." There is a certain point at which one after another will begin to find its high-reared head too heavy a burden; the head is bent, and at that instant the sun, glancing translucent across the wave-top, lights it to a gem-like depth and brilliancy of green; the next instant the gleaming depth of green is changed to a yet more brilliant snow of foam, as the wave breaks and arches its crest, seeming to hasten the quicker as if with a knowledge that its long journey is near the end. Its foam is tossed back by the wind for the sun to play on, with all the myriad hues of iridescence; then comes the final crash against the cliffs, a sudden arrest of onset that seemed well-nigh irresistible, a thunderous noise of the meeting of the two ancient world-forces of attack and defence, a tossing back of a vast cloud of evanescent spray, a dying moan and struggle, and the great, blind force is spent.

Away in a place like this, where you see the waves hurrying shoreward, you seem to have surprised their secrets. You seem to have got at their hearts and stolen their confidences; you hardly seem to have treated them with honesty. The very shape of their smooth, hurrying convexities, instead of the threatening oncoming concavities to which you have been accustomed, seems to confess that you have taken them at a disadvantage, equivalent, in warfare, to a turning of the flank. But the ocean is too grudging of her secrets for us to feel compunction when we can catch her unawares. We have to win from her what and how we can.



THE beautiful pictures which accompany this account of Biddulph Grange will indicate to the observer that no common mind was at work in the planning of these attractive and fascinating gardens. They were, in fact, the creation of a man whose love for natural beauty was a consuming passion, and to whom the gardener is no small debtor. The late Mr. James Bateman is known to every orchid-grower as having been the pioneer in bringing among us that race of ravishing beauty, and of having been one of the first to advocate and succeed in "cool" orchid cultivation. To the graceful fancy—shall we say the caprice?—of that gentleman, and to his fastidious love for the curious, beautiful, and varied in the garden world, do the fair pleasantries of Biddulph Grange owe their existence.

Before we describe them it is right that we should say something about the man to whom their character is due. Mr. Bateman, who died in 1897, was the son of Mr. John Bateman of Knypersley, which is the neighbour of Biddulph. When very young he displayed great interest in tropical plants, and at Knypersley he was the first cultivator in England to bring to maturity the fruit of the carambola (*Averrhoa carambola*). Before he took his degree at Oxford in 1834 he had sent out

collectors to the West Indies to bring home plants for cultivation which were described in Loudon's *Gardeners' Magazine*. From Mexico and Guatemala also he procured many rare and beautiful orchids, and in 1837 he commenced his great work on the orchidaceæ of those countries, which was not completed until 1843, being published in atlas folio, with a great series of coloured plates. Only one hundred copies of the splendid work were published (at the price of twelve guineas), and a copy sold, when the Duke of Marlborough's library was dispersed, for £77. Mr. Bateman's monograph on the odontoglossum is well known, and he produced a "Second Century of Orchidaceous Plants" in 1867.

The gardens at Biddulph were begun about sixty years ago, the work being long continued, and the triumph is the more remarkable when we remember that the place was created out of an old farmhouse and a swampy moor, lying in a lofty and inhospitable region on the Cheshire border of Staffordshire. Here came into existence gardens which have long been recognised as among the most perfect of their kind in England, and they are full of very beautiful and remarkable things. In style there is a happy association of the natural and artificial, and the idea was, by happily arranging the surface of the ground,





THE EGYPTIAN GARDEN FROM THE WEST TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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IN THE EGYPTIAN GARDEN

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE EGYPTIAN COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and forming it into a variety of miniature hills and dales, nooks and recesses, to secure shelter and exposure, sun and shade, lake and stream, suitable to a great variety of plants. Mr. Bateman's original mind conceived many ingenious and even fantastic devices, and in certain parts of the grounds there are features and contrasts that have the effect of surprise, and that excite both wonder and admiration. To some extent Mr. Bateman appears to have been influenced by the Chinese style of gardening, which had been brought to Western knowledge a century before by Jesuit travellers, and had been translated into English garden forms. Père Attiret, describing the great "garden of gardens" at Peking, had spoken of its artificial hills, 20ft. to 60ft. high, with little valleys interspersed, rivers and rivulets, winding paths, and bridges and temples. Dr. Joseph Spence, the friend

of Pope and Walpole, who translated Attiret's account, greatly popularised this style of landscape gardening, and though Sir William Temple spoke of the Chinese garden as "too hard of achievement," fifty years later it was being freely copied, and the garden at Biddulph is a late example of it. We may almost say of it what Arthur Young said of the Trianon, which he described as conforming "to what we read of in books of Chinese gardening." "It is not easy to conceive anything that art can introduce in a garden that is not here: woods, rocks, lawns, lakes, rivers, islands, grottoes, waters, temples, and even villages . . . very pretty and well executed."

The Chinese garden at Biddulph Grange has attracted a good deal of interest, and the pictures show how really beautiful it is. The enchanted region is approached by two mysterious





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THE BRIDGED POOL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

tunnels, at one end of which is the glen, a romantic hollow, rich in rock and water-loving plants. The lake in the Chinese garden is hemmed in with great masses of rock, and there is a curious floss-house, with grotesque bulls and frogs, a temple near, and a charming bridge which would seem at home in the legendary garden of the willow-pattern plate. The whole of this garden and glen at Biddulph is most rich in its varied foliage, the colour effect, doubled in the mirror of the lake, is enchanting, and the extraordinary number of different plants is surprising. The picture showing the path leading down the glen to the cavern shows the remarkable beauty of the place, and its infinite richness, especially in rock and water plants. Mr. Bateman realised

the delights of wood, rock, water, and bog gardening long before the modern taste for these things was revived, and in the hands of Mr. Heath the place maintains, and even increases, its charms. Love for Nature in all its varied forms is evident everywhere in this enchanted region.

But the attractions of Biddulph Grange do not end with the Chinese garden, as the pictures will disclose. There is an exquisite grouping of shrubs, with all manner of evergreens, and veritable walls of ilex and yew. The Egyptian garden, thus enclosed, with its pyramids and obelisks, is another attractive region—a place of sequestered calm, lying below the terraces, where two sphinxes keep watch by the temple door, and the tall

hedges rise on every hand. What could be more attractive, or more effective as a contrast, than the magnificent step walk, to which we ascend from the Chinese garden, with the magnificent buttressed wall of yew below the terrace? Or what could form a more tempting approach than that ascent between the splendid leaden vases and the tall hedges of ilex to those garden delights beyond? There is, indeed, a splendid prospect from the terrace, extending on the one hand over the fascinating features of the landscape garden, and on the other over the splendid evergreen hedges, rank above rank, which give such dignity and character to the higher parts of the gardens on the left. How great is the distinction between these noble pictures and the more natural character of the lower parts of the gardens with which they are so sharply contrasted!

Those who have described Biddulph Grange have vied with one another in their enthusiasm of delighted surprise. The pinetum, with the green gloom of pines, araucarias and deodars, the arboretum, partly paved with stones from the Appian Way, and the Wellingtonia avenue, are all beautiful. Then there has been described the "Obelisk Walk," "the gradients of which are so treated as to deceive the eye into the impression that what

is really a path is an obelisk." The Rainbow is another delight in the time of the gay rhododendron and the fragrant azalea, being delightfully planted with these fair denizens in rows of varied colours; and the dahlia walk, later on, is not less attractive. Indeed, go where we may, the whole of the garden area is admirably cultivated in natural or formal style. Colonies of flowers bloom from spring until autumn, and not an opportunity has been missed in the aim of charming, delight-

ing, and surprising those who are privileged to survey this triumphant garden success.

It was Mr. Bateman's pleasure to show his gardens, and Mr. Heath is equally generous in admitting many to view and enjoy the delights that are prepared. The extensive fruit and vegetable gardens are at Knypersley Hall, to the south, an old seat of the Batemans, which before them had belonged to the Bowyers, of whom was Sir John Bowyer, an active Parliamentary officer, and still earlier to the Knypersleys. The glass-houses are most complete, and, as might be expected, are rich in rare orchids and other beautiful plants, including the most splendid of camellias and rhododendrons.

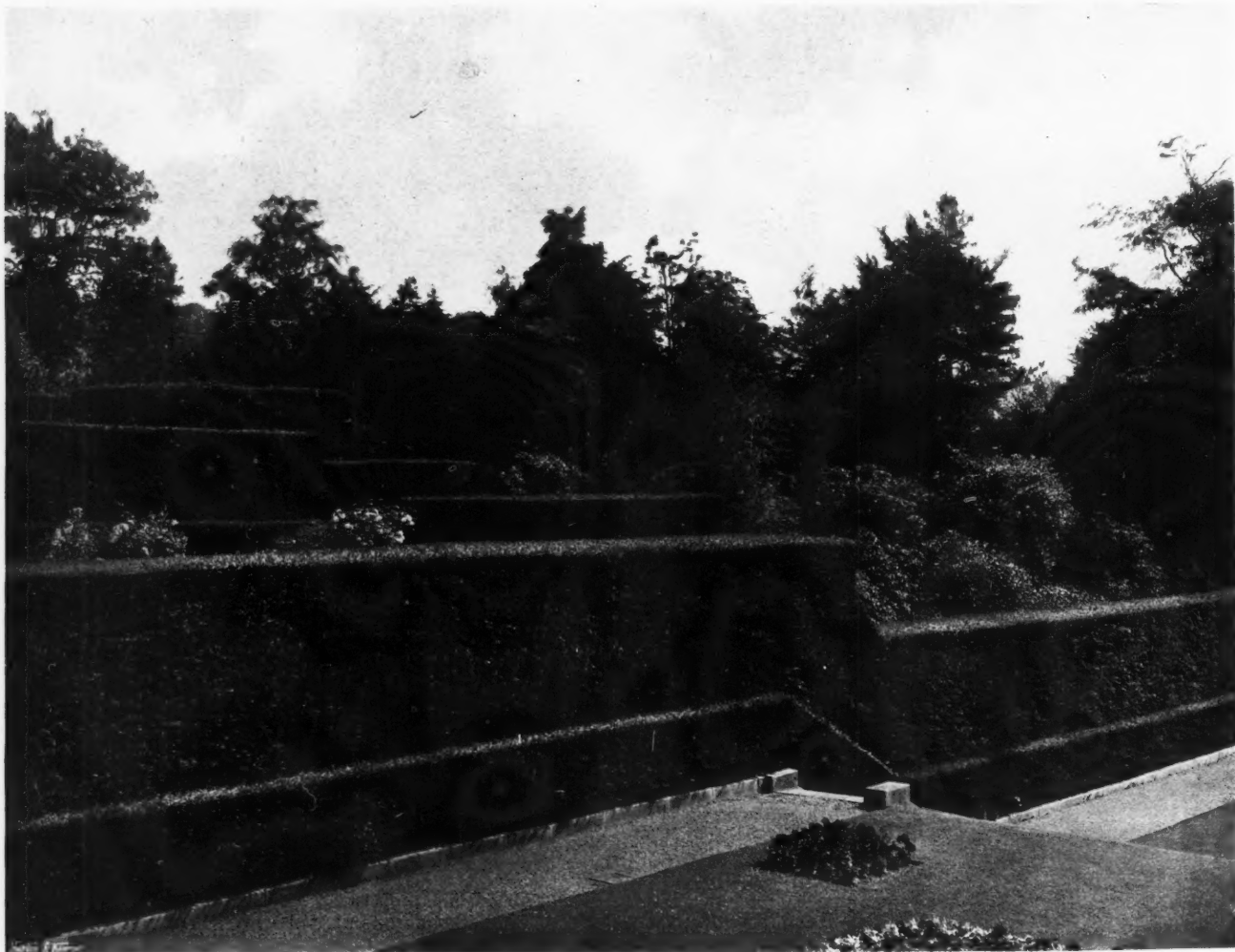
The purpose of this article having been to describe the



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THE GLEN FROM A CAVERN.

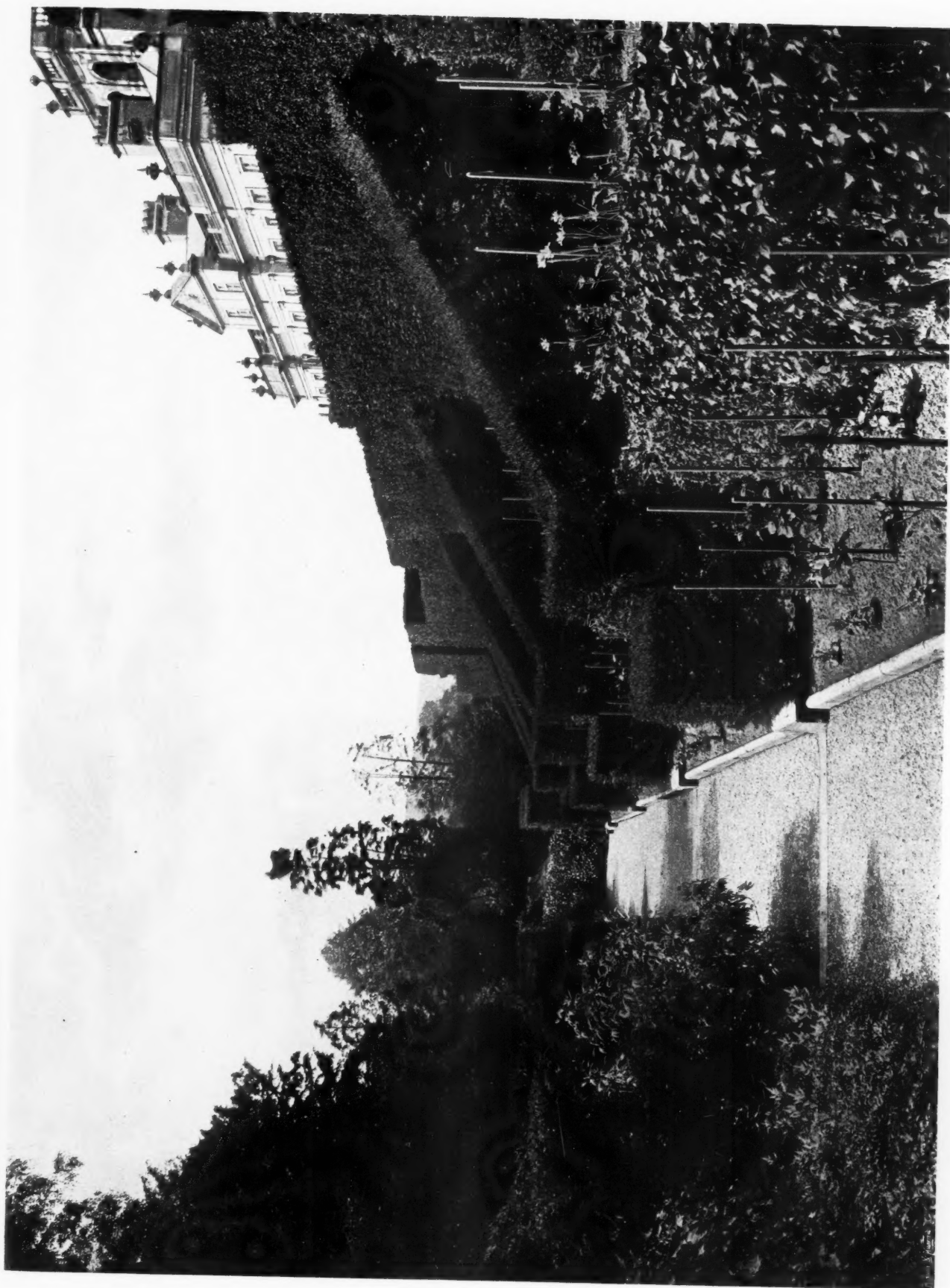
"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE EAST TERRACES.

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THE STEP WALK.

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THE DESCENT TO THE POND GARDEN.

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THE CHINESE GARDEN.

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THE JOSS-HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

gardens of Biddulph Grange, we shall have little to say of the house except that it is a long and irregular Italian building, notable among the mansions of North Staffordshire, and that it contains an interesting geological gallery, together with many curiosities and antiques. The neighbouring country is interesting. This is the gathering-ground of the infant Trent, and in the west rises the long ridge of Congleton Edge, or Mow Cop, which divides Staffordshire from Cheshire. The country is very varied and almost romantic, and the judicious hand of Mr. Bateman, followed by the late Mr. Heath, M.P., and his son, the present possessor, has taken away its asperity, and given it a charm which is often wanting in much more southern lands. It was a wild country in former times, and on Biddulph Moor, where the Trent has its source, once lived the fierce, half-gipsy race of the "Biddlemoor Men," said to have been descended from a Saracen, whom one of the early lords of Biddulph brought from Palestine and made his bailiff in this remote region. The remains of Biddulph Hall are in the neighbourhood, built by Francis Biddulph in the year of the Armada, and a noble specimen of Elizabethan architecture. The place was ravaged in the time of his grandson, a devoted Loyalist, when it was held for the King by Lord Brereton, and besieged in 1643 by his kinsman Sir William Brereton. It is recorded that all was in vain until a great gun called "Roaring Meg" was brought up from Stafford to batter the place down. A modern house occupies part of the site, and was occupied until recently by Mr. Robert Bateman.

FISHES AND THEIR INFERIORS.

A GREAT work like the "Cambridge Natural History" (Macmillans), in which ten volumes are projected by the editors as the latest contribution to semi-popular scientific literature by twice as many specialists, must inevitably be subject to delays in its passage through the press; nor could it be expected that the volumes should appear in their systematic order, covering the whole of the animal kingdom from Nature's ground floor, where the protozoa and sponges reside within sight of the vegetable frontier, up to man and the other mammals, who look proudly down the evolutionary ladder at the humbler creatures beneath. Thus, the last volume of the ten appeared some time ago, while the first is not even announced as "in the press." In addition to the ordinary difficulties of carrying out so important a work, the editors, Dr. Harmer and Mr. Shipley, have had to contend with minor delays, particularly in the case of volumes jointly written by several authors. In the present volume, for example, which deals mostly with fishes, but also devotes four chapters to such lower marine forms as balanoglossus, the sea-squirts and the lancelets, his new duties at the Birmingham University have prevented Professor Bridge from being ready with his account of the structure and functions of fishes, in some respects the most interesting, as it is the longest, section in the book, until now, whereas Professor Herdman's section on sea-squirts and lancelets



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BIDDULPH GRANGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

was completed four years, and Mr. Boulenger's systematic account of teleostean fishes two years, ago. As, however, the editors have afforded opportunities of revision down to date, in order to keep pace with the present rapid march in biological research, the book suffers little if at all from the divided authorship.

It is the nature of composite volumes to offer some little contrast between the styles of those who contribute. In the case of the reptiles, birds, and mammals, a single specialist took charge of each, with the result that the manner of treatment was homogeneous throughout. In this, the seventh volume of an indispensable library of zoological information, it will be found that, as regards fishes, the "popular style," popular, that is to say, combined with absolute accuracy, is adopted only by Professor Bridge, Mr. Boulenger having had to deal with so enormous a number of genera, not to mention species, in the quarter of the book assigned as his share, that he could do little more than give a masterly condensed account of the systematic position, affinities, and distribution of that great teleostean order, which, with the exception of the sturgeons and a few edible sharks and rays, includes the whole of the world's commercial fishes. Mr. Boulenger has, as might be expected of so distinguished an ichthyologist, acquitted himself of the drier task with such sense of proportion (his accuracy in the anatomical portions of the work may be taken for granted) that the reader will be the more inclined to regret his only two lapses from the academic platform. Thus, the information that the tarpon "when hooked affords good sport, the landing of so active a giant being attended with great difficulties," is a platitude to the sportsman, and can have even less interest for the student. And on what evidence does Mr. Boulenger base his amazing assertion that toxotes, the archer fish, or *ikan sumpit* of the Malaysians, can shoot flying insects? I was never lucky enough to see this fish, though I have stood on rivers in which it lives; but a pretty close enquiry in its native islands persuaded me that its watery missile was launched only at insects at rest on some overhanging bough or reed. To the anatomist there may be no great difference, but to those who take an interest in shooting, the distinction between "shooting flying" and hitting a stationary target is of great moment. Only within the last half century, or a little more, has even man brought his firearms to the perfection of killing flying birds; but the mouth of the little archer fish has undergone no improvement by a Rigby or a Holland, and it still

contents itself—or so, at least, I believe, unless Mr. Boulenger can produce evidence to the contrary—with insects at rest. That in itself is wonderful enough without any elaboration. Travellers' tales are bad enough from travellers; when fabricated by eminent scientific men who stay at home, they are appalling.

Professor Bridge contributes a wholly delightful and informing account of the life history of fishes, their manner of breathing and swimming, of producing sounds and hearing them, of reproducing after their kind, and also of the functions of their fins and lateral line, of the spiracle in the sharks and rays, and of the air-bladder in such teleosteans as are provided with that

complex organ, which is sometimes absent and always subject to difference of size, shape, and structure, according to the nature of the fish and the purpose for which it is bestowed.

One of Professor Bridge's most interesting sections is that which deals with coloration in fishes. He draws attention to the little-appreciated brilliancy of colour in this class of animals, and successfully demonstrates that British fishes, which are certainly a large proportion of sober-hued forms, include an opah and a red gurnard, in the same way as British birds include a jay and a goldfinch. The episode of colour-change is also fully dealt with, though to his instances of pallor induced by shock the writer might have added the most familiar case of all—that of goldfish losing their gilt when their bowl is upset by the house-cat, a phenomenon which has more than once come under my own observation. His reference to clay-water having affected the Ivy-bridge trout might usefully have been complemented with a marine instance of the manner in which clay effluvium on the Cornish coast tends to produce white flatfish, particularly in the post-larval stage, in the inshore bays. Colour-protection, too, is dealt with in some detail, though here the professor overlooks an important point which is of great moment to the fishermen, at any rate in their look-out for the pilchard shoals. He tells us that pelagic fishes are so coloured as to harmonise with the dark water and hide them from sea-fowl and other enemies. This is the theory of the classroom, and as a theory it is a pretty tribute to Nature's care for her lowest children. But I wish I might have the privilege of taking the professor out some day on the coast of Cornwall and of showing him that it is possible to see a shoal of pilchards reddening the water at a distance of at least a mile. And what the "huer" can see obliquely from the cliffs,



Copyright ILEX HEDGE AND LEAD VASES AT BIDDULPH GRANGE. "C.L."

surely the gannet and cormorant have no difficulty in seeing from a point directly over the shoal. In short, this colour-protection might be serviceable enough to a single mackerel or pilchard, but these fish do not swim singly, and in shoals they are always conspicuous when swimming near the surface. This, however, is a minor error, as is also that of describing the tope as a "bottom-feeder," without the qualifying statement that it is the only dogfish which habitually follows the lines to the surface, and there bites off the lower half of the whiting or pollack under the fisherman's very eyes. Professor Bridge is perhaps mistaken when he insists that the gasping noise made by a gurnard (and, for the matter of that, by a conger as well) when drawn out of the water is capable of utterance in the sea like the voice of the American "drum."

It is only a deep interest in and admiration for the book that has perhaps induced a hypercritical mood. With the chapters contributed by Dr. Harmer on the worm-like shore-dweller, whose offensive smell is its chief protection against greedy enemies, or with those by Professor Herdman, who here leaves the domain of economic ichthyology, with which those who read the publications of the Lancashire and Western Fisheries Committee have of late years associated his name, for the more academic biographies of the sea-squirrels and lancelets, I am not qualified to deal as critically. But the whole volume impresses me as equal to any of its predecessors, and the editors will, on the completion of the series, have the satisfaction of contemplating a work with which, for thoroughness and interest, no other of recent appearance can compare. F. G. AFLALO.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IT would be interesting to collect a number of qualified opinions as to the *vers de société* of the present time. Some critics would hold, and with reason, that this class of composition is not by the younger writers of the present moment done so lightly and brilliantly as it used to be in the later half of the last century. Such a thought might be pardoned in anyone who took up the book of *London Lyrics* (Macmillan), which has just been added to the Golden Treasury Series. The book appeared first as long ago as 1857, and has been several times republished. Mr. Austin Dobson, who writes an introduction, describes the author's aim as being to give greater finish and a less trivial motive to that class of metrical effort which has been unscientifically called *vers de société*. If we turn up the "Lyra Elegantiarum," we may there find a definition which Mr. Locker-Lampson himself gave of occasional verse, which he said should be "short, graceful, refined, and fanciful, not seldom distinguished by taste and sentiment and often playful. The tone should not be pitched high; it should be terse and idiomatic and rather in the conversational key. The rhythm should be crisp and sparkling, and the rhyme frequent and never forced, while the entire poem should be marked by tasteful moderation." The number of authors who have succeeded in attaining to this high standard is very small. Even Winthrop Mackworth Praed, one of the most versatile of men and gifted poets of his time, did not on every occasion reach the level at which we expect to find him. Perhaps it might be interesting to quote one or two of the older examples before proceeding to re-examine those of Mr. Locker-Lampson. It seems to us, for instance, that the right tone is beautifully caught by Matthew Prior in the following:

"As after noon, one summer's day,
Venus stood bathing in a river;
Cupid a-shooting went that way,
New strung his bow, new fill'd his quiver.
With skill he chose his sharpest dart:
With all his might his bow he drew:
Swift to his beauteous parent's heart
The too-well-guided arrow flew.
'I faint! I die!' the goddess cried:
'O cruel, could'st thou find none other
To wreck thy spleen on: Parricide!
Like Nero, thou hast slain thy mother.'
Poor Cupid sobbing scarce could speak:
'Indeed, mama, I did not know ye:
Alas! how easy my mistake!
I took you for your likeness, Chloe.'"

In a graver and quite different key is Sir Philip Sidney's:

"My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.
His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his."

There is no doubt that Mr. Locker-Lampson was a very sedulous student of the older practitioners in his craft, and, perhaps, allows his work to be, especially at the beginning of his career, coloured by their influence. And at one time the poet of the *Ingoldsby Legends* was the model, while in later life his affections drew more towards Wordsworth. Whether this be so or not, he succeeded in being the most accomplished versifier of his age in the field he had chosen. Mr. Austin Dobson very finely says: "He was too careful of brevity to be ever wearisome; and of flatness or obscurity he may assuredly be acquitted. As a metrist he is uniformly neat and polished. He can be charmingly playful; he can be archly gallant. His manner is clear, direct, and simple; his wit as lively as his irony is delicate; and his humour seldom without its touch of sadness." First we give this in the vein of Praed:

"The glow and the glory are plighted
To darkness, for evening is come;
The lamp in Glebe Cottage is lighted,
The birds and the sheep-bells are dumb.
I'm alone, for the others have flitted
To dine with a neighbour at Kew:
Alone, but I'm not to be pitied!—
I'm thinking of you!"

Anyone who turns over to Praed's familiar "Vicar" will recognise the resemblance at once:

"Some years ago, ere time and taste
Had turn'd our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way, between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket."

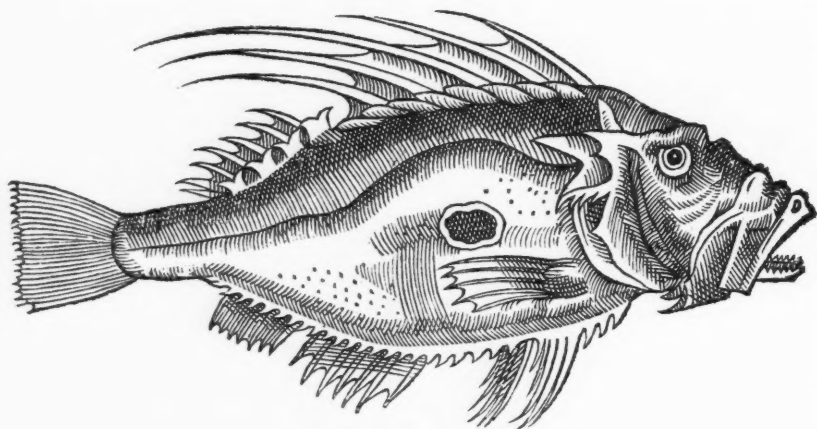
In contrast with this we give two specimens in which Mr. Locker-Lampson stands on his own feet and is truly himself. They may not be the best in the volume, but they are extremely characteristic. The first is one of those altogether delightful things that he could write about childhood:

"They tell me I was born a long
Three months ago,
But whether they be right or wrong
I hardly know.
I sleep, I smile, I cannot crawl,
But I can cry:
At present I am rather small—
A Babe am I.
The changing lights of sun and shade
Are baby toys;
The flowers and birds are not afraid
Of baby-boys.
Some day I'll wish that I could be
A bird, and fly;
At present I can't wish—you see
A Babe am I."

The other shows an entirely different side to the poet's badinage, and is a delightful piece of cleverness:

"They nearly strike me dumb,—
I tremble when they come
Pit-a-pat:
This palpitation means
These Boots are Geraldine's—
Think of that!
O, where did hunter win
So delicate a skin
For her feet?
You lucky little kid,
You perish'd, so you did,
For my Sweet.
The fairy stitching gleams
On the sides, and in the seams,
And reveals
That the Pixies were the wags
Who tipt these funny tags,
And these heels.
What soles to charm an elf!—
Had Crusoe, sick of self,
Chanced to view
One printed near the tide,
O, how hard he would have tried
For the two."

It would be difficult to say whence this poetry derives its peculiar aroma or charm. At the back of it we know there is what is commonly called a man of the world, scholarly, witty, and cultured, who did not indeed "shake and laugh in Rabelais' easy-chair," but, with the twinkle in his eye that is amusement with a touch of cynicism rather than boisterous open laughter, noted the foibles and weaknesses of mankind. There are serious thoughts within him, too, but even they have been turned to melody and brightness; in fact, they are most frequently to be noticed in a line more musical than the others, because



THE JOHN DORY.

to its original intention has been added a note of pensiveness, a touch of something that closely approaches melancholy. No better example of his graver work can be given than "The Old Stone Mason":

"A showery day in early spring,
An Old Man and a Child
Are seated near a scaffolding,
Where marble blocks are piled.

His clothes are stain'd by age and soil,
As hers by rain and sun;
He looks as if his days of toil
Were very nearly done.

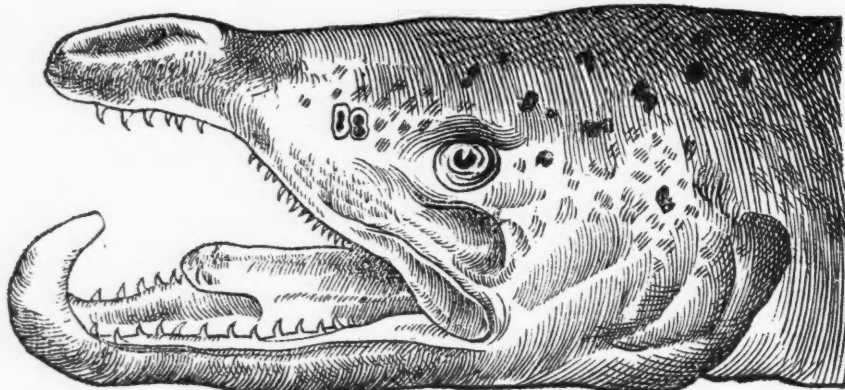
To eat his dinner he had sought
A staircase proud and vast,
And here the duteous Child had brought
His scanty noon repast.

A worn-out Workman needing aid;
A blooming Child of Light;
The stately palace steps,—all made
A most pathetic sight.

We had sought shelter from the storm,
And saw this lowly Pair,
But none could see a Shining Form
That watch'd beside them there."

CURIOUS OLD FIGURES OF FISHES.

THE pictures illustrating old books of natural history are always interesting from the point of view of quaintness. We here give four, taken from one of the oldest books on fishes and other aquatic animals, "Petri Bellonii Cinomani De aquatilibus," Libri duo, an oblong 8vo, published in Paris in 1553. The author of this work, Pierre Bélon (latinised Bellonius) was born in Maine about 1518, studied in Germany under Valerius Cordus, travelled in Italy and the East, and returned to France in 1550. Charles IX. had granted him rooms in the Château de Madrid, in the Bois de Boulogne, and, returning one night from Paris, was murdered in the wood in 1564. His work, "De aquatilibus," contains figures of 110 fishes, mostly from the Mediterranean, which are often quoted in



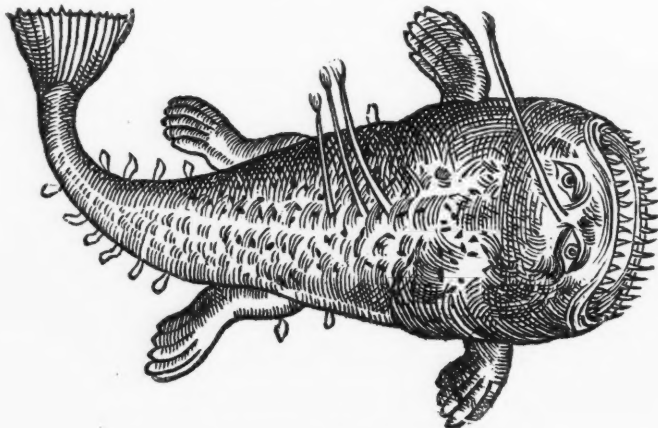
THE HEAD OF A MALE SALMON.

treatises of ichthyology. The letterpress is of no small importance, as giving the names in use in the Greek Archipelago, and it has thrown much light on the identification of the fishes mentioned by the ancient Greeks.

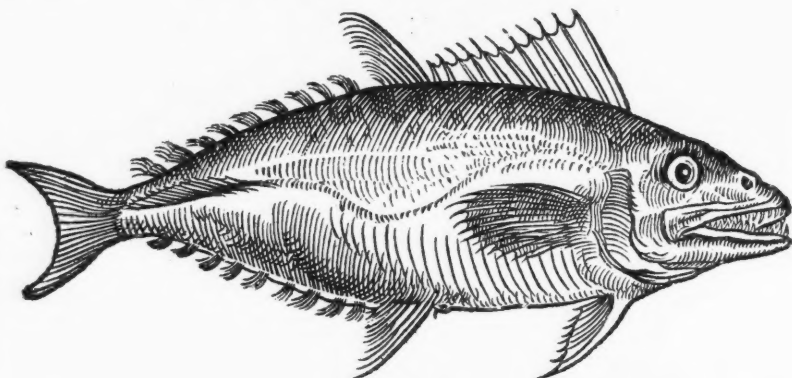
The Angler, or Fishing-frog (*Lophius piscatorius*), is a curious representation of the *Rana marina*. Here we have a fine instance of the way in which old iconographers drew on their imagination, the paw-like pectoral and ventral fins being quite unlike the true state of things. This fish derives its name from the singularly modified first ray of the dorsal fin, inserted on the snout, movable in every direction, and terminating in a small skinny flap, which is supposed to be used by the Angler as a bait by which to attract other fishes, which are soon engulfed in the enormous gape armed with long, hinged teeth.

The Tunny (*Thunnus thynnus*) is a very incorrect figure, evidently drawn from memory.

The teeth are much too large, the pectoral fins lack the falciform aspect so characteristic of all the tunnies, and the keel on the side of the tail has been rendered by the artist or engraver as a series of fin-rays.



THE ANGLER, OR FISHING-FROG.



THE TUNNY.

The John Dory (*Zeus faber*) is a somewhat grotesque, but perfectly recognisable, figure of the fish described as "*Dorada aut aurata gallica, quam itali Dini Petri piscem nominant.*"

This is still called St. Peter's fish in many countries, owing to the round dark spot on the side of the body, supposed to represent the finger-marks of Peter when pulling out the fish which was to contain a coin in its mouth (St. Matthew xviii., 26). Bélon tells us that at Rome the qualities of its flesh only became known through the French cardinals who attended the conclave after the death of Paul III., but this is in disagreement with the statement of an earlier author, Paul Giovio, 1524, who rightly compared the flesh of the John Dory to that of the turbot.

The head of the male salmon is one of the best figures in the book, and shows well the extraordinary hook developed on the lower jaw of the breeding male. But it is, unfortunately, described as "*Caput Salmonis femina.*"

THE LABOURER AND HIS TASK.



W. Selfe.

FOLLOWING HIS FLOCK.

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WE have had so many open winters during recent years that the spells of frost and snow which have recently occurred come as a surprise, although it is worthy of note that a hard winter was prophesied by those who understand rustic lore. There is a pretty saying to the effect that God takes care of the birds; that is to say, he sends them a plentiful crop of berries before the advent of a really hard winter. "Many haws, many snaws," they say in Scotland, which comes to the same thing, and the autumn of last year was characterised by an uncommonly abundant supply of wild fruit. Thickets were black with bramble-berries, or red with scarlet hips. The tall lawthorn hedges in the evening sunshine glowed with the ruddy

hue of the haws. Acorns, too, were more than usually plentiful, and they furnish a table alike for the furred and the feathered tenants of the woodland. For weeks together jackdaws, rooks, wood-pigeons, and jays scrambled and

fought for them at the roots of the oak trees, while squirrels, mice, and such small deer grew fat on a similar bounty. The real deer love beyond all else the crab-apple and the beech-mast. They are still to be seen poking under the red leaves of the beech trees for the latter, and they stood up on their hind legs and gathered crabs from a height that any casual observer would have deemed beyond hope of their attainment. And now in the cold dawn and the early evenings when the



W. Selfe.

MORNING MISTS.

Copyright.

birds feed, the natural supply they find to be exhausted. One sees the bullfinch and his mate hunting the hedge and ever speaking words of loving comfort, so that although they get apart they are not separated from one another, and when night comes they rest on the same little bough or spray. Frost does not hurt them so much as snow. Even in very hard weather there are little rilllets and pools which, owing to some overhanging tree or other protection, do not get frozen over; and hither the little wanderers gather for the purpose of foraging. Even when the river is frozen over, the principal dwellers on its banks, the moorhens, come up to the farm and steal the food laid out for the poultry. For them and for others the custom is a growing one to spread bread-crumbs on lawns and garden-plots, where they receive a supplement to the scanty stores supplied by Nature. And there is a singular analogy between the birds of the air and the poor, plumeless ephemerals whom we call men and women. A hard winter does not involve anything like the suffering in the country that it does in the town, but yet it brings a certain amount of sheer starvation in its wake. During summer gardens and allotments and orchards are teeming with their respective produce. There is, to say the least of it, always something to eat and to ward off the ugly spectre hunger. But in winter the labouring people have to scramble for their livelihood in the same manner as the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. There are fewer odd jobs to be done, and casual work is liable to stoppage at any time. In a very keen frost, for instance, the hedger finds it difficult to keep his tools from breaking; the ditcher is thrown idle altogether; and the drainer can no longer pursue



F. A. Swaine.

RESTING-TIME.

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his avocation. Previously, work used to be saved from the autumn in order to employ the hands on winter days, when threshing, for example, was done by hand or machinery that gave a great deal of employment. Needless to say that to-day it is all accomplished by means of a "traveller"; and if ploughing or similar work is rendered impossible by the state of the ground, there remains little work beyond that of carting manure to the fields. At times like these, the farm labourer knows what an advantage it is to have a six or twelve months' engagement, as is usual in the North, where he agrees to work and to be paid in rain and shine. But in Suffolk and other counties where the men are only hired from day to day, it is to be feared that a hard frost involves a great deal of suffering at a time when it is not easy to bear it. This is what called into being the excellent custom of distributing coals and blankets and beef and bread at Christmas-time, and we trust that wherever possible the early days of the New Year will see a repetition of the process. Fuel, especially in the Southern Counties, is a very important item in the family budget. Wood is much scarcer than it used to be,

owing to the neglect of forestry, and to the fact that it scarcely pays landowners to cut down timber, while the long carriage necessary for coal raises the price to a degree almost incredible to people who have lived within easy reach of the pit head. Yet cottages, especially those that are old, require an extra amount of heating to be even decently habitable. Many of them have the most extraordinary holes in roof and walls, to say nothing of ill-fitting windows and doors that open into the living-room. The saving grace lies in this—that



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THE FIRST LAMBS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

men who are continually living in the open air get so strong and healthy in constitution that they can bear hardships which would kill townsmen. Indeed, many of them look quite happy and comfortable taking their cold food at the back of a hedge, or a stone wall, in the bitterest weather, glad of the rest, even if the keenest wind be blowing. In building new houses the avoidance of draughts is a point deserving of great attention, because it is so much more difficult in a small cottage than in a large house.

There are some of the farm labourers who, of course, are quite busy at this period of the year. Already on Down country the lambs are beginning to appear, and the shepherd must needs take his wooden hut out into the lambing-fold, and keep many a long nocturnal vigil, sallying out from time to time, with lantern in hand, and in the intervals snatching what sleep it is possible to obtain in those brief glimpses of time. Luckily frost and snow do not seem to cause much extra discomfort to the ewes and their offspring, who suffer very much more from prolonged rain than from any other weather. It turns the ground on which they feed and rest into a puddle and, entering their fleeces, brings on cold, rheumatism, and kindred diseases. Anyone who will listen to the coughing that goes on after an extremely wet period and to that which follows a snowstorm, will appreciate the extraordinary difference between the effects produced. The cattleman, too, is busy at this season, since his charges have to be indoors for the greater part of the day and require to be fed with artificial foods. He was to be seen in old times on winter days carrying a great forkful of hay on his shoulder from the stack to the cattle-yard, and so appeared to be a very vivid representation of winter itself. But nowadays the heavy work is nearly all done by machinery. On very few farms are cattle fed with pure hay, as it has been found much more profitable to chaff it and make a forage. Then even the carrying round at a well-planned homestead is done by means of tramlines and a little waggon on wheels, so that where it required from seven to twelve men one now is often enough

for the purpose. During all these years of depression when the labourer has been leaving the soil the object of the farmer has been to devise machinery that would enable one man to get through what it required twenty to manage before. And even in the laying-out of his yards, the building of ricks and stacks, and the choice of manure-heaps, economy of time and labour has been very carefully studied. It was not the rural exodus alone that caused the agriculturist to exert his energy in this direction, but prices fell to such a degree that no margin of profit would have remained at all if means had not been devised for greatly lessening the cost of production. But the result is that a novel and difficult position has arisen. During the greater part of the year extremely little labour is needed on an ordinary farm, but there are and always will be particular seasons when a larger supply is wanted. What is required, therefore, is that there should be a small permanent staff and a large amount of floating or casual labour that can be obtained when it is so desired. The only way of accomplishing this that has yet been suggested is to make small holdings in

every part of the country where it is practicable. The people on these tiny farms would not have quite sufficient to occupy them for the whole of the year, but would be glad to have the opportunity of earning wages now and then. In places where small holdings have been in existence for a long time, the plan works out very satisfactorily, and, as far as we know, there has not been brought forward any valid objection to the extension of the system.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

NEW YEAR FLOWERS.

AT the beginning of a new year one always begins to look for "signs of spring" whenever the sun shines or the air is mild; but, fortunately for wild life at large, Nature moves more slowly than our hopes. In the garden, indeed, where we have plants from other lands, accustomed by inheritance to take advantage of the earliest lengthening days, winter aconites and some lovely irises thrust their blooms above the soil in defiance of frosts to come, and during recent winters many hardy garden flowers of the previous summer have absurdly lingered in bloom until, early in January, they have met upon common ground with some precocious plants of the following spring. But, as a rule, our British wild plants, with their ancestors' ages of experience of the British climate, are wise enough not to respond all at once to the "spring-like" feeling which mild days in January inspire. With the exception of four ubiquitous and ever-flowering weeds—groundsel, chickweed, shepherd's purse, and red deadnettle—and the patches of golden blossom which the furze may bear in any month of the twelve, the daisy and occasionally the buttercup in our fields, and doubtfully wild primroses and periwinkles in shrubbery or coppice, practically complete the list of wild flowers that one may hope to see in the first week of January. Nor need we complain; because British plants which made a habit of jumping into bloom whenever the sun shone in mid-winter would suffer so much in the almost certain frosts to follow as to be unfitted for the struggle of existence in this wayward climate.

CAUTION IN EGG AND CHRYSALIS.

Nature is equally cautious in holding back the changes which small life undergoes; for the little caterpillars would surely perish if they issued prematurely from their sun-warmed eggs before the proper foliage for their sustenance had burst its leaf-buds; and butterflies and moths which emerged

too soon from their pupa-cases would be quite unable to pack themselves back again when the cold weather suddenly returned. So, although the eggs of moths may be so small that you could pile half-a-dozen of them into the space of a pin's head, they have room for judgment of the passage of time, so accurate that no vagaries of the seasons tempt their immature inmates forth before the world outside is ready for them. Considering that in some cases these tiny eggs were laid so long ago as last May, it is no small wonder that the cumulative effect of a gracious year of sunshine, such as we enjoyed in 1904, should not accelerate the spark of life in such tiny envelopes by so much as a fortnight, compared with the dates which followed such a year as 1903, when we had scarcely any summer heat at all during the whole dreary twelvemonth.

MIDWINTER INSECT LIFE.

In the same way the immature life of moth or butterfly, which has slept in the pupa from, perhaps, last midsummer, still awaits its proper season, although Nature allows these perfect moths and butterflies, which are simply sleeping in hiding-places of their own choosing, often to make the mistake of fluttering forth into the sunshine when January smiles. There is no day of the whole winter when the small tortoiseshell butterfly may not be seen, if the weather is exceptionally sunny; and now and then even the brimstone



C. F. Gare.

THE CLOSE OF DAY.

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butterfly may be prematurely tempted forth from the Christmas decorations in a warm room. But in these cases it is always possible for the butterfly which has made a mistake to retrieve it by retiring again to a suitable sleeping-place; and, even were it otherwise, Nature has had no opportunity of fixing for their time of sleep any such periodicity as governs the development of the germ within the egg or the immature insect within the pupa. In hibernating insects no physical change occurs. It is simply a question of sleeping and waking, and going to sleep again. For this reason, any one of the three dozen kinds of butterflies or moths which hibernate in Britain may sometimes be found out of doors in mild January weather; while, except the three or four kinds appropriate to midwinter, not one of the many hundreds of kinds which sleep as chrysalids through the winter ever make the mistake of appearing in January with the early winter aconites, which are often covered with snow the next morning.

SMALL ANIMALS AT LARGE.

In life of bird or mammal Nature's rules are more elastic. The pipistrelle and other little bats may be tempted forth on any midwinter day or night. So may the voles and the mice; and even the little shrews often wander in the shrubberies in December or January. Frost and snow do not debar the squirrel from his scampering quest of the nuts which he buried broadcast in autumn; and many a gamekeeper knows well the smudged track in the snow left by a wandering hedgehog in his search for winter food. There is, in fact, no British mammal whose appearance in a mild week of January may not gladden you with its seeming promise of spring.

FEATHERS AND MANNERS.

Among the birds one can almost note from day to day the changes which a sunny week of winter brings. As the dull-edged feathers which many of them put on with their autumn moult wear gradually bright, their minds become attuned to that rivalry in love for which the brightness of their

plumage is appropriate; and, when fine weather gives them abundant food and leisure in the lengthening days to follow their seasonal inclinations, we witness many dress rehearsals of little passages from the coming drama of the spring. As the starling's head grows glossy and his bill pales to sulphur yellow, so his manners become combative towards others of his own sex and officiously attentive to the russet-tinged female of his choice. As the tom-tit's perky crest brightens to azure, quarrels thicken round his restless path; and when the great tit makes great display of the brighter yellow and denser black of his breast, you may expect daily to see him bringing his bride to the bird-table.

FORESIGNS OF SPRING.

The conspicuous pallor which has been stealing over the faces of the peewits in the fields begins to be reflected in the politely distant airs which the males assume towards each other, although they may still for convenience consort together in flocks; while the partridges, similarly remaining for the most part in coveys, show by the quickness of their crowing challenges and their readiness to take offence from each other, that their strife of spring is already simmering so near the surface, that even the mild warmth of January sunlight suffices to make it boil over. When the wandering kestrel calls for a mate, when the solitary gull sports and laughs aloud in erratic flight, and when the crow retires apart to utter the slow snoring notes which constitute his love-song, with the skylarks shrilling aloft and the hedge-sparrow excitedly dribbling out his little music as, with flicking wings, he precedes his demure little mate down the garden path—even the house sparrows show by their blackening bibs and the increasing babel of their chirrupy conversation in the shrubberies, that new thoughts are moving in their minds—it is surely not too early, even in the first week of January, to talk of "signs" of spring, although between these signs and the reality may be fixed a wide gulf of months filled, perhaps, with blizzards and snowstorms, frosts and fogs.

E. K. R.

CORRESPONDENCE.

POULTRY-FARMING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I be allowed, as one who has devoted a very considerable portion of my life to the poultry industry, who has been concerned in the foundation of utility poultry shows, has written numerous books on the subject, and acted as judge at some hundreds of poultry shows, to express my regret at the publication of an article in your issue of December 24th? The writer, who obviously writes in good faith, has nevertheless made the most extraordinary and misleading statements, which may induce many persons to go into poultry-farming, which I beg to state, without fearing contradiction, has never yet under any circumstances proved a success. I have known very many scores of women who have lost all their little fortune in the attempted establishment of poultry farms, and also of capitalists who have wasted thousands, and in some cases been utterly ruined, by the attempted establishment of large poultry farms. I deny that there are any poultry farms now being carried on in England with success, and until the publication in your recent issue I never saw a balance-sheet of any one published. It may be replied that these farms exist in large numbers on the Continent, and are the source from which the innumerable eggs that we receive are obtained. This I entirely deny. There are no poultry farms on the Continent. Captain C. L. Sutherland, who has spent many years as Commissioner in investigating the agriculture of the Continent, in his report to both Houses of Parliament wrote as follows: "It is a commonly received idea in England that there exist in France huge poultry farms, where fowls are kept by several hundreds; and it has been over and over again urged on English farmers to adopt this poultry-farming on a gigantic scale, as some sort of means of alleviating the present depression and enabling them to make money. A long acquaintance with the chief French poultry-breeding districts, as well as answers to enquiries I have from time to time made on the subject, enable me positively to deny the existence of such establishments." The eggs that we receive are produced by the small peasant proprietors, and the idea of competing with them in the English market is absurd. Eggs in Russia are sold at three a penny, in many parts of the South of Europe at two a penny, prices at which they cannot be produced in England. I regret I cannot receive the statements of the author of the article; there must be mistakes in the accounts, which possibly have been compiled from recollection. The authoress states that she began without fowls, commencing early in the year with incubators and foster-mothers. Her first chickens were hatched at the end of January. These were supposed to be laying at the end of June. Only a very few of the chickens of the 240 hatched at the end of January could possibly have been laying at that time. We are then informed that without any fattening these chickens were ready for the market and sold at 3s. each. This is perfectly incredible. Five months old chickens, unfattened, are worth on an average half that amount. We are then informed that these birds during the year laid no less than 50,000 eggs, and that these eggs were sold, 30,000 at 1d. and 20,000 at 1½d. each, that being the very highest retail shop prices in large towns. The statements as to feeding are no less incredible. We are told that in summer the birds were only fed once a day, having to find their own meals during the rest of the twenty-four hours. The condition of the birds as table fowl, and the production of eggs from birds on grass land, fed only once a day, may be imagined. The labour incurred in this poultry farm is put down at £13 a year, for packing and conveyance of 50,000 eggs, and the killing, plucking, dressing, and conveyance to market of over 1,000 poultry. If the balance-sheet which is given is analysed, the most extraordinary statements are to be extracted from it. The eggs from which the fowls were hatched were bought at an expenditure of £50. If we enumerate the number of eggs put into the incubators we find that they would cost about threepence per egg. The cost of food is given at £300—rather a large sum, considering that the fowls are said to be fed once a day in the summer. The receipts are of the most extraordinary character. The chickens are said to be sold at 3s. each without having been put up to fatten, their ordinary value in

this state and age being less than one-half. Ducks produced £13 15s., and geese £16 4s., each gosling being supposed to realise 6s. This statement is published as an accurate balance-sheet of the first year's experience. My only reason for writing is that, if this account is allowed to go unchallenged, it may influence many persons at this season of the year to think of establishing poultry farms, which, it may be repeated, have never been maintained successfully in this or in any other country. Poultry is a profitable adjunct where the surroundings enable fowls to be kept in moderate numbers and without expense for land, buildings, attendance, labour, and but little for food. The publication of such an account in an influential journal is calculated to do a great amount of injury, by encouraging ignorant persons to plunge into a hopeless pursuit—one that has never yet been proved to be a success.—W. B. TEGETMEIER.

We forwarded Mr. Tegetmeier's letter to the writer of the article, who replies as follows:

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with some amusement the fierce attack Mr. W. B. Tegetmeier has made upon my article in your issue of December 24th, and much as I value Mr. Tegetmeier's theoretical knowledge on this subject, I think I am quite competent to judge, from my own practical experience during three years, whether poultry-farming, taken up on my lines, is likely to pay. It is very easy to calculate with pen and ink at your library desk, and make assertions in the polite manner Mr. Tegetmeier adopts. We have heard so often that poultry-farming in England does not pay from those of his standing who do not know the practical A B C of the working part of the business. This was my reason for devoting myself to this branch, and I do not retract one syllable of the facts and figures already given. I am perfectly cognisant of the manner in which eggs are collected from the small peasant proprietors in France, and there is absolutely no reason why the same plan cannot be followed in England. Is Mr. Tegetmeier aware of the fact that during several months of the year eggs can be procured in England at the rate of twenty and even thirty a shilling? Scarcely, I think, or he would not make the assertion about Russia and the South of Europe. It is true in the winter months you must pay 2d. each for eggs even in the country villages. Why? Simply because the industry is not worked throughout the year, but only during the given months of natural hatching. Then, again, the statement that 1½d. is "the very highest retail shop-price for an egg in large towns" is absolutely incorrect; 2s. and 2s. 6d. a dozen would be nearer the mark, unless, of course, Mr. Tegetmeier means the type of egg known as the "Dan Leno." Even the pickled or water-glassed eggs were sold at 2s. 3d. per dozen last winter, when, owing to the abnormally wet season, eggs were at a premium. I did not ask Mr. Tegetmeier to receive my statements, either in reference to the accounts, condition of the birds, or the price at which they sold. Facts speak, not theories, and all my statements are facts. Has Mr. Tegetmeier a special breed of birds that require feeding during twenty-four hours? I was always under the impression that they roosted at night. If so, I do not wonder that he found poultry-farming unprofitable. One point I must touch upon, that this gentleman ignores, and that is: I was not dependent on markets for the disposal of my birds or eggs, but despatched regular supplies to private customers, who not only were glad to have them, but recommended my produce to friends. Birds I did not consider good enough for my clients I sold at 2s. 6d. to poultry-dealers and neighbouring market towns. The egg produce alone, I maintain, is a living, if properly understood, and poultry-farming in England—with all due respect to Mr. Tegetmeier's theories—systematically worked throughout the year, with the help of incubators and foster-mothers, cannot fail to be a success, undertaken, naturally, by anyone who has practical knowledge and not afraid of hard work.

RITA DETMOLD.

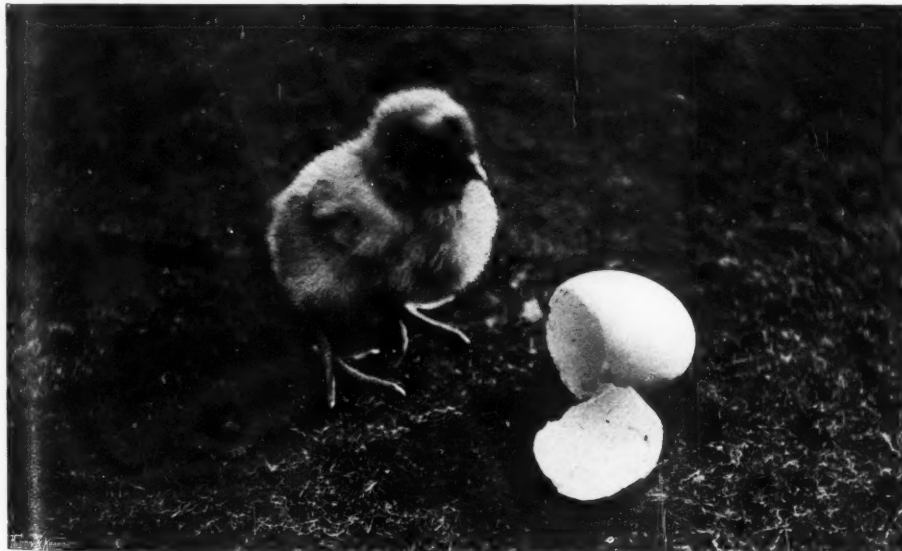
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The experiences in poultry-farming as recorded by your correspondent (Miss Detmold) in the issue of COUNTRY LIFE of December 24th are of interest to me, having an intention of a like venture; but I am at a disadvantage, not having in my neighbourhood any incubator at work, and therefore being without means of ascertaining the names of the most reliable makers of these machines, their price, etc. I should like one positively serviceable, yet without any great intricacy in management. If you could find it permissible to solicit information for me in your "Correspondence" columns, and so inform me, you will be adding to my many obligations. I am, Sir, very truly yours, O'S., Carrick-on-Suir.

LONDON FOGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I read with appreciation your note on the irony of the circumstance that the date of one of the thickest fogs for some years was the date selected for the discussion of a paper on the decrease of fogs, by Mr. Brodie, at the Institute of Civil Engineers, before the members of the Royal Meteorological Society. In spite of the blackness of the atmosphere the lecturer maintained his point manfully. No one who has happened to live for a winter in an elevated position, overlooking lower ground, can be in much doubt as to the manner in which fogs originate. They are formed on the low-lying ground at a low temperature, and gradually extend their area in the absence of wind to dispel them. Thus they are often formed in bands along the line of a valley, and the bands, more or less preserving their shape, create those "solid walls of fog" into which people sometimes tell us that they dash. The London fogs are formed chiefly to the east of London, in the Thames Valley, and in those low-lying marshes which used to be so extensive between Ilford and Stratford, but are now largely restricted and reclaimed for building. The London fog almost invariably comes with a gentle east wind, and it is this restriction and reclamation of the fog-producing area in the east of the city, combined with the various beneficial agencies which diminish the output of smoke, that have decreased the fog nuisance of late years. Sir Oliver Lodge claims to be able, by scientific means, to dispel fog in a small area, but his system is too expensive for general adoption; and the Blue Book on the subject suggests the title of the immortal comedy, "Much Ado About Nothing." Indeed, there is a good deal to make ado about, but the only thing at all clear and not mysterious about fog is the manner of its origin. A recent letter in *The Times* suggested that London fog was of a different character from country mist, and stated that fog in London occurred when the country was clear. The day taken for an illustration was an unfortunate one, for it happened that in many parts of the country there was dense mist on that day. London fog is simply country mist *plus* London smoke. Often many hours of the day are brilliant in the country, while



A DEBUTANTE.

a dense fog reigns in London; but these are always days in which the early mornings have been misty in the country. The sun, however, has succeeded in dispelling the mists in the country, but with the help of the smoke the London fog has been able to withstand the attacks of the sun. But you will never see fog begin in London except under conditions that produce mist in the country. It has often been remarked that the London fog has a singular way of penetrating into the houses; it might also be remarked that it seems to have a singularly singular way of penetrating into the brains of some of those who discuss it.—H. G.

BIRDS VISITING SITES OF THEIR NESTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—We have in our garden boxes put up for the nesting of tits and other birds that make their nests in hollow trees, biscuit tins set horizontally in hedges and the like appropriate places, and a few old boots, likewise set up, for the use of robins. Few of these convenient places are ever left untenanted. What is rather curious just at this time of year, that is to say, in the mild days of the winter, is to see how the birds come back to visit these sites, as if to see that they are all right for their occupancy in the spring. They cannot



A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

think that it is nearly time for them to begin nesting, although it is true that the robins are very early nesters. But besides the robins, we have the tits going in and out of their boxes, and actually there is a little fighting going on round and about them, probably the old birds informing last year's nestlings that it is no good their coming back with any idea of occupying the family nursery in the spring. It has been noticed, I think, how often house-martins come back for a last look, before going South, at the nests under the eaves in which they brought up their families. This look round of the other birds, settling their nesting-places for the spring, seems to be very much an expression of the same instinctive habit. At all events, I thought you might perhaps deem it of sufficient interest to find space for this letter.—H.

FIRST THOUGHTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Surely no young animal can well feel a greater sensation of surprise than a bird which has just left the shell within whose walls its being has been called into existence, and the expression on the face of the young duckling whose portrait by Mr. T. Bletcher I am sending you, in the hope that it will prove of some interest, seems to clearly define the train of thought which is going on in the awakening brain. How did I get out? and now that I am out, what is the next thing to do? and how am I going to get on? Hunger will soon help him to solve these questions.—Y.

THE LAST WOLF.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In connection with the depredations of the wolf which has ravaged the flocks on the West Northumbrian Fells for a while past, and which was killed by a passing train near Carlisle last week, the following verbatim copy of a paragraph on page 571 of *London's Magazine of Natural History* for October, 1835, will no doubt be of considerable interest: "A Fact on the last Individual of the Wolf killed in Scotland—In a Catalogue of Mr. Donovan's Sale of the London Museum by Mr. Kirg, April, 1818, one article is (in page 53, lot 832) a 'Wolf, a noble animal, in a large glazed case. The last Wolf killed in Scotland, by Sir E. Cameron.'—J. C. Dale, Glanville's Wootton, Dorsetshire, April 20, 1835." It is not impossible that this very unique relic of the last indigenous wolf of Great Britain

may still survive, and that someone of your many readers might be able to supply information concerning it.—R. S. W.

THE VARIATION IN SIZE OF BRITISH MAMMALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Though most of our wild mammalia live under much the same conditions all over our islands, the differences seen in their size strike me as rather remarkable. I am not speaking of the disparity between park-fed stags and Scotch red deer, because, as the former live on some of the best pasturage in the country, and the latter on some of the poorest, the difference can

easily be explained. But the discrepancy in size in such mammals as otters, foxes, badgers, stoats, and even rats, as well as in the growth and weight of hares, is rather surprising. I have just been looking at the stuffed skin of a very large otter which weighed 38lb. It looks nearly double the bulk of an ordinary otter, though, of course, it was not. Foxes shot in some of the big cliffs of Devon are different not only in size, but in colour, from the ordinary foxes, and hunting men know that even inland there are found very large foxes, differing from the ordinary size and proportions of the species. Those on the Scotch mountains are also very large. The size of many of the stoats trapped by keepers is such as would raise a doubt, were it not for their colour, as to whether they were not crossed with some larger form of mustelidæ, such as the ferret or polecat. The author of "Happy Thoughts" mentions as one of the less happy ones, that in an ancient house where he was a guest, "rats as large as rabbits have been seen sitting on the top of the cellar steps." It would be interesting to know what weight old buck rats do reach. Probably no one cares to weigh them. It is said that the largest hares are found on the Lincolnshire Wolds; whether that be so or not, hares and also rabbits in low, wet, clayey ground are much smaller than those on light, high, dry soil.—C. J. CORNISH.

TROUT AND GRAYLING.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—From the time of Isaac Walton the angler has always been a contemplative man; but there are some days, particularly when the fish are not rising well, that seem to lend themselves especially to contemplation, and it was on one of these that we found ourselves revisiting a stretch of the Till, in Northumberland, which we had fished in schoolboy days, and on which, more than a quarter of a century ago, we were familiar with every eddy and corner. In those days grayling were unknown in the neighbourhood; but having been introduced into the Till a few years ago, they have multiplied exceedingly, till now they almost threaten to elbow our old friend *Salmo fario* from his ancient home. Not only have the grayling increased in numbers in the most extraordinary manner in these waters, but they have attained large dimensions, fish of 1lb. being pretty common, while some of them run to more than double that weight, and this, be it remembered, in water where trout of 1lb. in weight are few indeed, and far between. The grayling, however, does not afford the sport that trout give, while in Northumberland he is considered far inferior to that fish for the table, and in consequence he is not popular. We were staying with a friend whose beautifully wooded domain abuts upon the river, and having borrowed a rod and tackle, started down stream, on a dull November day, quite as much for the pleasure of renewing our acquaintance with well-remembered haunts as with any expectation of filling our creel; and, as events proved, in neither respect were we to be disappointed. It was a colish afternoon, with slight showers, and fish were never rising well, but here and there, as we wandered down the bank, we basketed a nice



grayling or two, the largest about 2½lb., and landed and returned to the water again about as many yellow trout, sporting little fellows of 6in. or 7in. in length, and in wonderful condition, too, for the season of the year. From a deep eddy under the opposite bank we had just hooked and landed a grayling of nearly 1lb., when a rather heavy shower drove us to the shelter of an overhanging willow, whose broad trunk afforded a dry seat beneath it, and as the winter afternoon was already drawing in, we proceeded to make ourselves comfortable upon the bank, and resigned us to reverie and tobacco.—A. B.

A YOUNG SEAL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you the photograph of a young seal, which I took at Ormsay last October. I think you may consider it worthy of reproduction, as I was told by one of the islanders that it was not a common occurrence to find a young seal on the rocks that one could get sufficiently near to take a photograph of. It was 4ft. long, with thick fur of a creamy yellow colour, and the man supposed it to be about a fortnight old. It was unable to get away, and it was very angry, and growled and snapped at me when I went near it.—OLIVE BAKING.



WOODCOCK RISING FROM WATER.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—Your correspondent "X." in the Christmas Number of COUNTRY LIFE asks if anyone has actually seen a woodcock get up off the ground. I cannot claim to have seen this; but while shooting on Lough Erne in Ireland last week I fired at a woodcock which fell into the water some 20yds. from the shores of the lake. It lay there a full 3min. 4min., while we finished beating the covert, and then rose from the surface of the water and flew off, apparently none the worse. Four witnesses can vouch for the truth of this.—H. C. B. U.

VARIETIES OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—There are three species of nightingale recognised to-day: The British *Daulias luscina*, ranging over Europe into Africa; the thrush-nightingale, *Daulias philomela*, ranging from the valley of the Rhine and Southern Sweden eastward, and extending into Turkestan and South-west Siberia, and wintering in Africa as far south as Nyasaland. Turkestan

and Persia harbour the third species, *Daulias golzi*, which winters in Northern India. We may now claim the thrush, or "sprosser," nightingale as a British species, the first authenticated specimen of which was killed at Smeeth in Kent during October of last year. This bird was exhibited at the Ornithologists' Club on November 16th by Mr. M. J. Nicoll.—W. P. RYCRAFT.



INDIAN MOTH IN ENGLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—This Atlas moth (*Alticus atlas*) hatched on Christmas Day, about 6 p.m. The cocoon was sent to me from India in February last, and was placed in a box on a coil of hot pipes. It remained throughout the summer in the same place, and when the pipes were again heated in the autumn I intended to throw the pupa away; but as there still seemed signs of life it was left alone. On Christmas Day the pupa became very lively. I had cut the top off the cocoon, so that the pupa was easily seen twisting round and round within it. In the evening, about 6 p.m., the insect broke out—literally. The moth measures 11½in. from tip to tip when fully expanded. I took the photograph the next morning, the Atlas being still in the same position, holding on to the rail in the front of its house, and it appears quite unable to move.—ETHELBERT HORNE, Bath.

VOLKA'S CHAMBER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph is of the interior of the abode of a hermit or recluse, attached to the church at Kingsland, Herefordshire. It shows the coffin-shaped receptacle or cavity in which he slept, the window over it looking into the church. An exterior view would show it to be between the porch and the north aisle of the church, the porch facing north; and as the window and openings were unglazed, it must have been a particularly unpleasant domicile during a north-eastern blizzard. Locally it is known as "Volka's Chamber."—E. UNDERWOOD.